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# *The* Mountain of Fears

By

Henry C. Rowland

Author of "The Wanderers", "To Windward" and "Sea Scamps".

Illustrated

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A. S. Barnes & Co.

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*Published October, 1905*

*TO*

*DOCTOR LEYDEN*

*WHOSE ILLUMINATING PERSONALITY AND STRANGE EXPERIENCES I HAVE VENTURED TO INTERPRET IN THE HOPE THAT WHEN HE RETURNS FROM HIS QUEST IN THE "FORBIDDEN LAND" HE WILL PARDON MY PRESUMPTION.*

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# THE MOUNTAIN OF FEARS

# THE MOUNTAIN OF FEARS

"OCTOR," said my shipmate, Dr. Leyden, "have you ever made any especial study of nervous diseases—*central* nervous diseases—morbid conditions resulting from a derangement of the central cells?"

I told him that I had done only such work in this branch as a general practice would require, but that I had observed some few cases of especial interest during a military surgical service in the East, and proceeded to cite one or two instances of mental vagaries resulting from gunshot wounds in the head.

Leyden leaned both elbows on the taffrail and listened restlessly. Our little ship swashed through the short sling of the Spanish Main, the Pole star gleaming ahead, the

Southern Cross blazing astern, and all about the white, flashing crests of the phosphorescent sea. Usually Leyden was a good listener, but this night he seemed impatient, restive, to such an extent that I finally paused, annoyed, for nothing is so irritating as lack of attention to a solicited reply.

"Ach! but those cases are in the line of the ordinary!" he exclaimed.

"Pardon me," I replied, "but the last case I have given was distinctly *out* of the ordinary."

"I am awkward, Doctor," said Leyden, apologetically. "I mean that the relations of cause and effect follow the usual course—the histological changes in the cell produced impaired function of the organ and these primary changes were the result of trauma. But have you ever had occasion to observe the reverse of this condition—the action of the organ on the center—like a nightmare, where one has the liver poisoning the central cells——"

I interrupted in my turn. Leyden was no doubt a skilled naturalist, a close observer and a man of deep power of thought and analysis, but he was not a physician, had never made a regular study of physiological chemistry, and was, therefore, scarcely in a position to argue with a person who had.

"Such cases are not infrequent," I answered. "The ancient Greeks understood that much, as we see from their terms. 'Hypochondria'; under the ribs—the liver probably poisoning the brain, if you like; then there is the condition of hysteria often accompanying a movable kidney; the action of certain drugs on special centers——"

"Such as *cannabis indica*?" interrupted Leyden, "which affects the sense of elapsed time and makes the subject happy—or—what is that principle, Doctor, which produces xanthopsia, or yellow vision, and makes one sluggish and depressed?"

"Xanthopsia is an early symptom of *santonin* poisoning," I answered. "The alkaloid

is obtained from the unexpanded flower-heads of the——"

"Artemisia maritima—yes—I know the plant—but the active principle might occur elsewhere?"

"Possibly——"

"It is wonderful," mused Leyden, in the self-communicative tone that was often difficult to follow—"the microscopic filament that makes or unmakes a man; the minute neurons which carry such a potent impulse—like the flash crossing a continent on a tiny wire to send two great nations to war. The wire is short-circuited, the nation disgraced; the neuron short-circuited, the individual disgraced. Such a thing once happened to me, Doctor.

"This was in Papua, an awesome country which holds in its dark recesses many of the things one wants—and most of those which one does not. I had gone there with two other white men to look for gold. It is a marvelous country, Doctor; I do not think there is

any other like it; such a country as was pictured in the old imaginative school of painting; a valley, through which winds a mist river flowing intangibly from a mirage through a canyon bridged by a rainbow; travelers' palms, tree-ferns, lianas, dream-trees heavy with strange fruits and brilliant blossoms, in the distance mystic mountains rising as they recede, green yet forbidding, the homes of genii; their summits fantastic—the whole a beautiful, impossible, frightfully fascinating fairyland. This was that place where we went to look for gold.

"My two companions were failures—most gold-seekers are. I was not old enough to be a failure myself. No matter what the faults of these others, one did not deny their virtues. One was a Hollander, Vinckers, an engineer, a brilliant man, but one ready to step over the edge of heaven in sheer restlessness and a desire to see what was held by the abyss; the other was a Scotchman, disagreeable, morose, taciturn, harsh of speech and visage.

Both held hearts of steel; they were the most quietly courageous men that I have ever known. I ask you to remember this, Doctor, in consideration of what came later. Their courage had been tried and proved in many desperate situations . . . Ach!"—Leyden began to mutter again, shaping his thoughts with his tongue until I could with difficulty catch this thought—"the filament—the neuron—cut the sympathetic nerve in the neck of a horse and the animal begins to sweat upon the affected side; puncture the floor of the fourth ventricle of a dog—diabetes." He raised his voice. "There is a little center of thermogenesis, is there not, Doctor, the irritation of which will raise the temperature——

"We wandered through this shadow-land, this illusory place of promise whose inhabitants were ofttimes starving. Cannibals?—yes; many white men have been that through acute starvation; chronic only tends to confirm the vice. They were a strange, shy,

kindly people—to us, who understood such. The 'Barbary Coast' in San Francisco, the parks in Melbourne, or the water-front in Hong Kong, are all more dangerous than Papua. We wandered through these people, accompanied by kindness, a whole tribe sometimes bearing our burdens until they reached a district dangerous to them, but where we made new friends. We wandered through this dreamland unmolested, walked with its fantastic peoples, black and brown and piebald; strayed in and out to the click-click-click of our little hammers, meeting dangers, it is true—the dangers which might confront a child walking blindfolded through a botanical garden filled with perils to its ignorance—and we tap-tap-tapped with our little hammers—right up to the slopes of the *Malang-o-mor*—the 'Mountain of Fears'—and we tap-tap-tapped on its slopes of quartz and basalt, little thinking that we knocked at the door of an evil spirit."

The bluff bows of our little ship smashed

the short seas into a flat track of phosphorescence, and against the pale background I saw a tremor of some sort shake Leyden's square shoulders, and it seemed to me that his voice was slightly breathless.

" 'The Mountain of Fears,' so our Papuans called it, and threw down their burdens at the edge of the stream and refused point-blank to stir another step; more than that, they implored us to go no farther ourselves, and a girl given to MacFarlane by a chief threw her arms around the knees of the rough old Gael and wailed like a stricken soul. An odd thing, that, Doctor, this cannibal girl given to the Scotchman a month before by this chief, to whom MacFarlane had given a harmonica on which he had first rendered 'The Bonnie, Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond' in a manner which should, by right, have got him speared. The girl had fancied him, slaved for him, followed him everywhere like a dog, and had ended by *softening* him—to such an extent that he ceased to curse and his manner was

less harsh—the elevating effect of a cannibal upon a Covenanter!—another inversion in this hallucinating country where the only actuality seemed the rapping of our little hammers.

"This girl, as I say, implored MacFarlane not to go on; for Vinckers and me she did not care; none of the women had much fancied us, while MacFarlane's lack of comeliness was almost bizarre; they were *obedient,* of course—but that was about all.

"MacFarlane leered up at the great forbidding mountain as it thrust against the dome of the sky its summit of snowy quartz, a-glisten in the bright sunlight thirteen thousand feet above the level of the sea.

" 'A cauld slope yon—too cauld for a lass in naething but a kiltie. Ye'd best bide here 'til I come.' He spoke to her in the vernacular, with which we were all three familiar, and told her to await his return.

"It was hot in that valley—a stewpan, withering, stifling with the equatorial reek which

wilts one to the bone; the nights stunk of fever. It was the southeast slope of the mountain which presented to us; and as we gazed up toward it from the little nest of trees where we had made our camp, the late sun blazed against its worn flank, and suddenly the broad, barren belt between the forest and the formation of quartz above the timber belt seemed to burst into flame and shone and sparkled and glittered as if flecked with scales of gold.

"'An omen!' cried Vinckers. 'The Mountain of Hope—not the Mountain of Fears! Something tells me that we shall find gold there—veins of it, knuckles of it—perhaps the bones of the mountain are solid gold; why not, in such a country as this?'

"The sun dropped behind the high hills to the westward, swiftly, as it does on the equator, and even more swiftly the gray shadow ran from the foot to the summit of the great mountain. It was as if one saw the color fade in the face of a dying man, and it seemed to

me that a cold draught struck down from the heights.

"'The Mountain of Fears,' said I—'the Mountain of Fears,' and as I stared at the monster on whose bristling hide we planned to crawl, parasites, searching for a spot to lodge our stings, the first shadow of foreboding swept over my spirits, just as the swift shadow had risen to throw its cold, blue light across the snowy quartz-field.

"In the valley we found the first signs of plenty; there were fruit and game and a sort of wild yam in abundance; and here we decided to rest for several days on the edge of the stream, for MacFarlane had a suppurating heel where he had trod upon a thorn, and Vinckers was suffering from a great nettle-rash upon his body. All three of us were hungry and our blood ran too thin to encounter the cold nights higher up the slope.

"We camped in a grove of trees which looked like the *papaya* and bore a fruit unlike any I have ever seen. It was shaped like an

*avacado,* had a pulp like wax, or bone-marrow, which was greasy to the touch, oily, and held a faint flavor of sandal-wood. At first we tried it with caution, for our native friends would not eat anything which grew in the shadow of the *Malang-o-mor;* neither would they sleep in the narrow valley, but retired each evening to the edge of the forest on the farther slope.

"We rested and we slept, and we ate of the fruit, which I called *myela,* because I did not think that it had ever been described, and I called it so from its resemblance to marrow; also, we drank of the stream, which was a deep ruby, spring-cooled and fragrant, but of which none of the Papuans would drink excepting the girl, Tomba, given to MacFarlane by the chief. She ate and drank and shuddered and watched her lord narrowly, as if waiting for the curse to fall and wishful to avert it.

"In the early morning we hunted the game or clicked with our little hammers on the

crumbling quartz through which the river gnawed its way. There was gold in the country, gold in the stream; one could pan enough dust in a light day's work to pay highly for the labor. But we wanted more than dust—we wanted the pure metal which none doubted we should find on the virgin breast of the mountain, and our fancy saw us winding back to the sea with our native tribe deep-laden with the wealth of buccaneers—winding out through defiles of mountain and forest, heavy with the plunder of the dread *Malang-o-mor*.

"Odd, Doctor; gold and dreams and sweat and death—how they all mixed together to strike the average which maintains the trim of the world——" Leyden's voice had sunk to muttering again, and he shivered, despite the humid warmth of the night.

"Daytimes we dwelt in Paradise and at night lay down to sleep, having first drunk of the stream, which we christened 'Lethe,' because on its banks we forgot the hardship and hunger of our long journey to the valley.

A Lethe it must have been, because each morning, when the late sun looked over the shoulder of the mountain and whipped up the blanket of mist stretched like a tent from the slope to the hills beyond, we forgot the miasmas of the night and the fetid fever smells and spores that spawned through the hours of hot darkness, and all of the while we ate more of the fat, oily fruit and less of other and more wholesome things, for this fruit of itself appeared to satisfy all needs, and we looked at each other and laughed at the physical changes of the few days, for we were growing fat and flabby as paretics. We slept a great deal, too, days as well as nights, and the sleep was at first of that delicious kind which one enjoys in the moments between waking and rising—a conscious sleep, in which one feels the myriad renovative changes of tissue, when each little cell seems to stretch and tingle and feed against the waste of the coming day. Feed they did, for the flesh came back, full

and soft, to our gaunt frames, and we looked at one another and laughed fat, gurgling laughs, and lay and smoked with our heads in the laps of the girls, and the tapping of our little hammers was heard but seldom on the flinty foot of the Mountain of Fears.

"The tribe had camped, as I have said, across the valley on the edge of the forest, but each day they came to see us, and we laughed at their surprise when they saw that all was well. We held them with beads and baubles and food and friendliness—chiefly the latter, for natives, like dogs, love to place allegiance with the higher mentality. One was puzzled that physical need had not run counter to superstition, for despite the plenty of the valley we found no trace of other inhabitants.

"Perhaps we had been three weeks in the valley, when one night I awoke dripping with perspiration and with a sense of nameless ill. 'A nightmare,' thought I, 'of which the color is lost and only the depression remains.' It

held me broad awake—and then for the first time I fully realized the nauseous reek of the fever-fog. One smelled odors which seemed to emanate from the entrails of the earth. You know, Doctor, the nauseous, charnel stench of rotting insects and vegetation, with the fetid breath of the flower that issues from the mouth of a great, carnivorous plant? You have seen these trap-like flowers, if one may call them such, which grow in the botanical gardens of Demerara? *Br'r'r'rgh!* And as I lay, hot and cold and clammy, with a heavy weight upon my chest, and thought of how we had lain and breathed that thin effluvium, the vehicle for myriad infusoria and plasmodiæ, this hypochrondriac fear became reasonable, and I marveled that we were still alive.

"Vinckers and MacFarlane slept heavily, torpidly, and their breathing was the stertorous gasping of drunkards. We lay in hammocks of plaited grass under a shelter of thatch; the girl's hammock was beside MacFarlane; and as I lay there, broad awake and

still depressed, my lungs half drowned in the dense humor of the valley and my ears ringing from the clamorous insect mob without, I heard a stifled, whimpering cry—the moan of a little child who has been whipped for inheriting nerves. It struck a chill—there was a great deal that was chill in that place of hot fears, cold passions, joyless content and light-hearted sloth—a place where one's skin crept clammily while the bones were burning.

" 'Who is that?' I asked, quite loudly, for I did not care if the others awoke.

"There came in answer the whimper of one too frightened to speak. Did you ever, as a child, Doctor, waken with the nightmare, afraid to cry out, afraid to move, tortured by the whimpers wrung out in reasonless terror? It was that kind of a sound.

" 'What is it?' I asked.

" 'It is Tomba.'

" 'What is the matter with you?' said I.

" 'I am afraid.'

" 'And what are you afraid of?'

"She found her voice then and began to tell me, but there my limited knowledge of the dialect failed, for I had no such linguistic scope as to-day, when one dialect more or less is simply a matter of ear and comparison. There was something in her speech of devils and death, and she kept repeating this and I do not know what besides—and then, as I was trying to reassure her as one might a child or a horse, less through the reason than the senses, the soothing of primitive sounds, a startling thing occurred. MacFarlane, whose breathing had become more labored, like that of a man rapidly climbing the ladder of consciousness from deep oblivion, gasped once or twice and awoke with a scream. Vinckers, roused with the echo ringing in his ears, awoke with a muffled shout—a strangled, bleating shout such as might come from a slaughtered animal. MacFarlane, but half awake, screamed again. At this Tomba's breathless terror found outlet in a shriek that swept out under the low mist, struck the

mountain-side and quavered away in countless reverberations.

"Vinckers shouted again and leaped from his hammock.

" 'Be still, you fool!' I cried, roughly.

" 'Wha—wha—wha——' quavered MacFarlane.

" 'What's the matter with you?' I cried, impatiently. 'Are you a couple of girls just out of a convent?'

" 'What *is* the matter?' asked Vinckers, thickly. Tomba was sobbing hysterically.

" 'MacFarlane wakes up with a nightmare!' said I, 'and sets you howling like a maniac.' My own fright made me irritable.

" 'Odd,' muttered Vinckers; 'odd—I had a nightmare, too.'

" 'Ye hag-ridden fule,' snarled MacFarlane, 'bawlin' and yammerin' like a bull! I had no nightmare mysel'!' He rolled heavily in his hammock. 'Fetch me a drink o' water, lass—water!' he added, in the vernacular.

"Vinckers sat up in his hammock, let his

feet hang over the side and, dropping his head between his heavy shoulders, stared down the valley. There was a moon somewhere behind the mist; this mist, diaphanous, vague, of any depth, yet lifted well above our heads, shone, not white, or colorless, as a vapor should, but a golden yellow; everything seemed golden, was becoming more golden daily the longer we stayed in that place of mockeries, and the reason of this was based on something more solid than a sentiment. What was the name of that drug, Doctor, which when ingested gives the yellow tinge to the vision? Santonica?—yes, perhaps that was it; perhaps its alkaloids were contained in that fatty fruit; perhaps it was only that the moon was one of those ripe, luscious, golden moons one sees on the equator. At any rate, the light came not pale and ghastly, as it should have been, but a luscious golden yellow; and that made it the more unearthly, as it illumined and gave a golden color to these dream objects—the fan-palms, the vague rock-heaps,

the vistas between which should have been ethereal, but, because of this succulent, sickly yellow light, were too material; and the aroma, which should have been dank, no doubt, but elusive, was a physical stench. Ach! a witch-fire would have burned in that place like a fat pine torch; one would have scorched one's hands near a *feu-follet;* there was a ponderosity to this place of ghosts. Can you conceive a *fat* ghost, Doctor—a fat, *unclean* ghost, who has clanked around, dragging his ball and chain until the sweat pours down his fat face—a malodorous sweat—a sweat that physically offends while it frightens? Once in my youth, in Leipsic, I went into the anatomical laboratory, and there was on the table a fat subject—a woman—and she still wore some gold-washed rings and had some baubles in her ears of too mean value to appeal to the cupidity of whoever had fetched her there. *Br'r'r'rgh!* She was pathetic, of course, but I was not old enough to feel that then. I can never forget

how much more awful she was to me than were the thin, meager, attenuated subjects who were consistent with the place. It was such a ripe, rotten ghastliness as this that was held in that valley which glimmered away at the foot of the Mountain of Fears."

Leyden paused, quivering, shuddering. One did not need to see him silhouetted against the phosphorescence to see that he shuddered; he was in a tremor, and the light from the *rook kamer* striking his strong, keen, nervous face showed that it was damp, wet, viscid with a moisture other than the humor of the Gulf Stream. He was living the thing over again with all of his high-strung, Teuton nervousness; and suddenly it struck me that it was hardly decent to let him go on—that it was my duty to interrupt him, just as it has been my duty at times to interrupt the unpleasant indulgences of other morbid impulses. But, on the other hand, speech is the safety valve of the mind; also, it is just to

sit passively and watch for the symptom which states the case.

"Vinckers observed this thing," continued Leyden. "Vinckers was an unimaginative man, and consequently the impression on him was as it would have been upon a dry plate, or the tracings of a seismograph, or any other machine which records automatically without contributing anything of its own. Vinckers was rather low in the animal scale—by low I mean primitive; as a man he was a splendid specimen, but he was animal enough to get rather more from his instincts than from his reasoning—like most women. He watched this thing, this yellow light coming through the mist and touching with its sickly yellow tinge all of the fantastic objects in the picture that belonged to the imaginative school of painting. He looked quite steadily at the dream-trees, too symmetrical to be real; the fantastic rock shapes, too fancifully grotesque to be the work of nature; he observed the yellow light upon the sluggish stream,

which flowed like molasses, and looked rather like it, too; the fringe of the forest—in fact, all of the component parts of the picture just as some morbid painting genius would have placed them—and Vinckers growled like a dog who sees something moving about the camp-fire invisible to his master."

Leyden turned to me insistently, claiming my corroboration of all this that he had worked out through hypertrophied recollection. "Is it not true, Doctor, that logic supplants instinct; that as soon as we learned how to tell by deduction where the person we sought had gone we were no longer able to lay our noses to the ground and decide the matter?" He began to maunder again—his auto-philosophy which was so hard to follow. "There are plenty of plants in nature which would poison the animals of the section if instinct did not prompt them to avoid these; a man will often eat of something and subsequently wonder at the cause of his derange-

ment; the animal will know and avoid this thing. At that time I was conscious of a morbid physical condition, but was unable to trace its source. Vinckers, lacking imagination, knew at once. 'Heaven,' I heard him mutter, 'was there ever such a mockery! We come to look for gold and we land in—quarantine!' It struck me as a new idea and I almost laughed. Gold and death, sickness and disease! How appropriate that they should be unichromatic! But it was Vinckers' next words which struck me. 'It is that accursed corpse-wax!' he muttered, 'that greasy stuff that we have been growing fat on!' *Ugh!* You see, Doctor, he was able to link physically cause and effect.

"MacFarlane began to mutter. Tomba brought him some water and he drank thirstily, swallowing with the audible gulps of a horse.

" 'I'm feverish,' he said, panting from the long draught, 'verra nervous and feverish. 'Tis a feverish place, this.'

"'It's rotten with fever!' growled Vinckers, who, like myself, spoke English better than the Scotchman. 'It stinks of fever—smell it! We were fools to stay here so long.'

"'We are a pack of lotus-eaters,' said I. 'You are right, Vinckers; it is this accursed stuff we have been eating—this adiposcere! We will get out of here to-morrow.'

"'Do you feel as if your inside was filled with lead, Leyden?' asked Vinckers.

"'It is worse than that,' said I—'molten lead.'

"You see, Doctor, we had been living on this rich, fatty stuff, which certainly contained a great deal of oil and I do not know what else besides—narcotics, no doubt. You know the richness of an *avocado?* They will tell you in some places that this fruit produces biliousness, but I have never heard that it had a soporific effect, as undoubtedly had the *myela* fruit. Then we had taken no exercise.

"I think that night was hotter than most; we

could not sleep, so up we got and smoked and discussed our plans for the future—at least, we started to discuss them, but even as we argued a lethargy came over us, and one by one we fell asleep, though dreading to do so and striving to keep awake through fear of another nightmare. An odd condition, Doctor, this drowsy fearsomeness; no doubt like a patient narcotized before an operation; dread fighting a drug until the latter triumphs and the patient whimpers off into fear-filled somnolence.

"The sun came to suck away the fever-mist and with it much of our dread. We laughed at the fears of the night and awaited the coming of the Papuans, but awaited in vain. I think, Doctor, that Tomba's scream had floated across the valley, telephonic beneath the mist to reach the listeners in the hills. At any rate, no human thing came near us that day. Later, when the shadows began to lengthen again, we wandered out, Vinckers and I, prospecting towards the na-

tive camp—I with a rifle, watchful for game, Vinckers humming to himself an old Dutch tune, careless in the full force of the sunlight, wandering behind me and clicking on the rocks with his little hammer.

"I was strangely lacking in breath as I climbed the hillside; as for Vinckers, he halted at the end of a hundred steps and would go up no further. Back at our camp MacFarlane lay smoking, with his head in the lap of the girl. I alone toiled up the slope, soft in heart and fibre, the sweat pouring from me in streams, sodden, with the spring gone out of my ankles and everything about me of a strange, sickly yellow hue which darkened as my breath came faster.

"I found the Papuans departed, so back I went, blubbering with breathlessness, muttering, fatigued, depressed, sluggish with sleep. Vinckers I found with his back against a rock, sleeping heavily. As I bent to rouse him my eyes fell upon a specimen which lay between his knees, and I saw that the little hammer

had cleft it open to lay bare a thick band of virgin gold. Vinckers had tapped at the door of Fortune and she had opened, and Vinckers had looked within and—fallen asleep! Had the goddess ever a more loutish lover? He was sweating, too, in his sleep, and I saw where the sweat had left a yellow stain upon his neckerchief, and as the late sun struck him it seemed to me that his skin also was of a chromish tint. You know the flabby pallor of the clay-eater? It was like that, fat and flabby, but yellow rather than pale.

"Back we went to the camp, where MacFarlane still lay and smoked or slept with his ugly, shaggy head in the lap of Tomba.

" 'Gold!' I said, 'the mountain is full of it. 'If it lies about loose here on the hillside, think of what it must be yonder where the mountain springs have done our hydraulic mining and washing in the same formation!' I pointed above us to the flank of the *Malango-mor;* the late sun struck it aslant, throwing

sharp, purple shadows into the numberless seams and fissures eroded in the crumbling crust; it flashed as it had each evening and glowed redly; high above, as the sun sank lower, the quartz beds threw back the deepening azure of the sky.

"'Perhaps it is gold,' said I, 'that bright stuff which glitters so; at any rate there is gold to be had for the taking, while we lie here and bloat and rot and waken screaming in the night. To-morrow we must go up.'

"'I'm no fit mysel', lad,' said MacFarlane. 'I hae the fever; I maun rest.'

"'You will rest here through eternity,' said I, 'if you do not come away at once. You are yellow as a Chinaman and there's not a line left in your face.' And with the aid of the girl I set about preparing a meal."

Leyden sucked in his breath sharply—filled his deep lungs like a man coming out of the dense, polluted atmosphere of a crowded car or clinic.

"That night I awoke thrice, and each time

a cold terror was clamping my heart, until I seemed to shrivel in the utter obliteration of all else. The dread was featureless; there was no dream, only this crushing, numbing, withering fear which froze sound and motion; and I lay and listened to the quick, faint *tick-tick-tick* of my heart-beats and waited to die —and, instead, I slept again, even while sweating with fear. The last time I remained awake; and as conscience dawned fuller this fear sat upon the distorted objects of the place, the swinging bulks of my companions, the dark roof, and as I looked out into the lambent, mellow-lighted valley fear walked beneath the vague, symmetrical palms and the shimmering umbrella-trees and lurked in the recesses of the fantastic rocks. Fear walked on the water of the oily, sluggish river that flowed with the sheen of molten gold through raw, eroded banks where the lips of the rocks protruded like the ragged edge of an ulcer.

"I lay inert, paralyzed, and presently

heard a faint, shuddering sigh; presently a moan, deep, hopeless, almost expiring.

"'Are you awake, Vinckers?' I managed to whisper, and my tongue could hardly articulate the words.

"'Yes—are you, MacFarlane?'

"'Ou aye, ou aye—what is it—oh, what is it, man?'

"'Have you had the nightmare?' I asked.

"'Yes—without the dream—only the fear—what *is* it?'

"'Ou, lads, we maun leave this place as soon as 'tis light——'

"'Hush!—ah, hush!' whispered Vinckers. 'I am burning up—come over here, Leyden—I am afraid to move—I was never afraid before—never in my life—ah—what was that!'

"'Ah, tush, man!' MacFarlane's rough voice choked. 'D'ye want to drive the heart of a man from his body? Tomba, lass, Tomba!' There was no reply.

"'Tomba!' said I, sharply. 'Tomba—Tomba!'

"'Hush!—ah, hush!' whispered Vinckers.

"'Why shall I hush?' said I, and my voice was shaking. 'Waken her, MacFarlane.'

"The Scotchman thrust out his great arm slowly, and in the faint yellow light I saw him snatch it quickly away; heard the choking rattle in his throat; felt my own heart flickering like a candle burned low.

"'Ou—ou—ou——'

"'Hush—hush—s'h'hh!' whispered Vinckers.

"And then, Doctor"—Leyden's voice had sunk until one scarce caught the bitter mockery—"I did the bravest act of my life. I slid out of my hammock." Leyden laughed in a way that sent a chill through me.

"Can you understand, Doctor? Do you know what fear is? Did you ever awake suddenly from a dreamless sleep with a devitalizing fear crushing the very blood out of your heart? No dream—no recollection—only the fear sometimes hung like a black mantle over the nearest object, no matter how familiar.

Purely reasonless—the organ acting on the cell; an inversion of effect on cause. In our own case, if one presumed that our diet, or water, or the fever, or any other extrinsic cause had deranged the organ—perhaps the liver—and thus poisoned the cell—the single center of Fear—as some drugs affect other centers—murderous—erotic—as Charcot, I believe it is, demonstrates that the odor of certain perfumes will throw the hypnotized patient into paroxysms of fear——

"I never did a thing so difficult as to get on my feet and walk to the hammock of that poor girl. She was quite dead—and the wet frost of the fear which had killed her lay moist and chill on face and breast. I did not dare to light a match to look at her; there is a limit, Doctor, to the courage of every man. I was never really frightened before; I can never remember being really frightened since; and my profession is one of countless risks to life. This was something far, far worse—the reason stampeding with the will——

"Then the lethargy crept on again. I crawled back to my hammock and, still fighting the fear, fell asleep. The others slept before I—and I could hear them whining and whimpering like young puppies taken from the litter.

"I was the first to awaken when the light came. My fear was gone and I lay drenched in perspiration, yet comfortable, unwilling to rouse myself.

" 'Oh, the awfu' nicht!' moaned MacFarlane, and covered his face with his gnarled hands. Vinckers did not speak, but shouldered his kit.

" 'Let us go,' he said, and we filed away from the place without looking back at the cannibal girl in the plaited hammock, her drawn face covered with the Scotchman's only neckerchief.

"We wandered down the valley looking for a place to ford the stream and begin the ascent. We had no carriers, no goods, no especial hopes, but these things did not trouble

us. We wandered along the banks of the dream-river and beneath the symmetrical trees, and filed between the fantastic rocks, which, from habit alone, we tapped with our little hammers; and still the sun had not looked over the edge of the eastern rampart of the valley, and we journeyed in the shadow of the Mountain of Fears. The Mountain of Fears—the Mountain of Fears—and nothing but peace on every hand! Nothing of harm—no danger of man or beast, nothing of heat, nothing of cold—a misty, dreamy peace; the dreads of the night supplanted by an apathetic shame which forbade discussion of these things. As for Tomba—why, she died of fever, poor girl—what else?

"We wandered down the valley and soon we came to a ford; there we crossed and toiled on up the slope of the mountain—up, up, up, panting, sweating, breathless, not clear as to purpose, but struggling to get up because—we did not know! As we climbed we tapped at the stones, because we were used to tap-

ping and chipping with our little hammers, and when we halted for the night we were high up on a wooded plateau, and the air was fine and thin and sweet with healthy odors of moss and fern and clean flowers. We were on the hip of the Mountain of Fears.

"We crouched on the edge of the precipice and peered down into the valley as the sun slipped over the crest of the opposite hills and drew after it the curtain of mist which hid the greasy river and the unreal trees and the jumping rocks, which from above looked like Titan children frozen at play. The mist hid all of these things, but now we were above instead of beneath it. Before it grew denser it formed a thin, flat pale through which one might look and see these objects, symmetrical and bizarre, fantastic and uncouth, which lay beneath, as one looks down through the thin water-line of a clear but stagnant pool and sees the fairy-like structures of an alien element. 'To-night,' thought I, 'we shall not slumber in that cistern.' It seemed to me

course, we had some of the fruit—the stuff that grew on the Mountain of Fears—I have never seen it anywhere else. We made a shelter and crept in to sleep.

"I suppose that it was hot enough, but for a month we had dwelt in the steam-room of a Turkish bath. Being younger and stronger, I had given my poncho to Vinckers, who had felt the chill of the higher air. Perhaps it was this circumstance which brought me through the night with my reason, for the cold wakened me before that moment of low-ebbing vitality which comes between midnight and dawn. I awoke shivering, dew-damp with the terror of the night before, and as I lay there waiting I heard the other two twitching and muttering. I suppose that I should have awakened them.

"The moonlight, which should have been clear on the mountain, was yellow as in the valley below; the moon was still high, and we lay in the shadow, but as I waited it passed the zenith and began its swift descent,

and soon the lower rim was cut by the edge of our leafy roof. For an hour no sound had come from the others, no stir; they had lain like dead men; and in my abject nervelessness I was afraid to investigate, but waited until the moon should sink lower and look directly into the place. MacFarlane was nearest me, and as the moon sank lower the yellow light crept up his body, which was motionless, as if carved in stone. It reached a hand lying palm downward on his thigh, and I saw that the back glistened with moisture. The sharp, golden moon-ray crept higher, and I watched breathlessly for his face, my own still in the shadow. His straggling beard turned golden; I saw his yellow teeth gleaming, the bristling lips drawn up and the breath hissing between in quick gasps. 'He is having the nightmare,' I thought, and might have found courage to awaken him, but at that moment the light shone full in his face, and I saw that his eyes were wide open, fixed, staring, brimming with an anguish of dread

primitive—to my mind all of these things sweep together through the same sluice."

There are no words which will convey the bitterness of Leyden's tone; mockery soared high in comparison.

"*B'r'r'rrgh!* how I loathe all such unicellular impulses in a man—a finished animal product. And that night on that mountain I yelped and howled in fear with those other two hairy animals—and I think that we fought and bit and struggled, for the next morning we were masses of minor wounds. Yet so far had we harked back on the trail of our savage forbears, driven screaming before that primitive and degraded passion of fear, that none of us was badly hurt!—which was even more shameful. I suppose, Doctor, that our terror was too elemental and reasonless to lead us to use weapons, whereas our limbs lacked the strength to enable us to kill each other with our naked hands; so that, instead of digging out each other's hearts with our finger-nails, we suffered most from skin-

scratches, upon which the flies settled. Ach! —I should like to say an obscene word, Doctor! Let's smoke!—let's have a drink!

"Oh, yes—we all came away the next day. Nothing happened to us—just as there was nothing to be afraid of. Please tell me that it was all due to a toxic action on the center of Fear—that is what I tell myself—and what a savant of Leipsic was good enough to tell me. Nevertheless, when I met MacFarlane in Sydney four years ago I crossed to the other side of the street—and he looked once and then away. There are some things in a man's past difficult to face; most difficult in mine is that last night on the broad hip of the Mountain of Fears."

## OIL AND WATER

E were skirting the Island of Margherita, which belongs to Venezuela and produces pearls of small size but excellent quality. I was smoking an after-dinner cigar with Dr. Leyden, the collector, who earns his living by supplying museums and professors with specimens from the animal, vegetable, and mineral worlds.

"Did you ever notice, Doctor," he asked, suddenly, "how African blood is curdled by being mixed with Anglo-Saxon?"

"I had always thought," said I, "that African blood mixes badly with any other."

"No. With Latin blood it will combine like whisky and soda, but the Anglo-Saxon plasma exerts upon it an action like that of alcohol upon albumen——" He paused and absently followed the course of a school of flying-fish

that flickered suddenly from the swash alongside and skittered away across the dancing waves.

"What suggested this topic to your mind?" I asked, curiously, for we had been discussing the relative naval strength of Germany and the United States.

"That island." He nodded toward Margherita as it rose, rough in outline, but with the misty softness of distance, from the quiet, pink and purple sea. The sun was resting on the rim of the sky-line, and its late rays bathed the lavender slopes of the mountains, that rose in tumbling confusion, their summits blazing with high-lights and their feet already clothed in slanting shadows.

Almost as we watched, the sun slipped under the sea; a multi-colored breeze rippled the face of the water; opalescent flashes sparkled here and there from the sails of the little Portuguese men-of-war, and then the daylight began to wane, as it seemed, in rhythmic beats.

"Odd," continued Leyden, clinging with Teutonic persistency to his theory, conscious but unaffected by his exquisite surroundings. "The popular idea is that an individual having a drop of African blood is more negro than white, even though the white predominates, as in the case of a quadroon or octoroon. This is wrong, Doctor. The white is by far the more potent strain, but, because it is more apt to color the mind than the skin, it is not recognized as such."

"Primitive organizations are usually more virile," I began.

"It is not of the physical but of the mental that I speak?" he interrupted, a bit testily. "It is an undeserved compliment to the negro and an unjust insult to the white to claim that a man having an equal amount of both strains is more black than white, but if the white strain is Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian, then he is both white and black, and all of each, for they will mix no more than oil and water."

He was silent again, and I waited, for I knew that he would presently back his theory by an illustration.

"You know Margherita?" I asked, presently, to help him get under way.

"Better than is necessary," he replied, and was silent again. The swift tropic twilight had almost faded; the slopes of the mountains were somber with mysterious shadows; a huge cumulus cloud, still crimson about its edges, was stranded on the highest peaks, and above it a dainty crescent moon was swiftly growing brighter.

"Let us go aft," muttered Leyden. "These cattle make too much noise!"

He was quite right, for that part of the deck was infested by our fellow-passengers; the Venezuelans were chattering like a band of apes; naked babies lived and moved and had their unclean little beings where they listed; near us a British engineer was arguing in Spanish with a German coffee planter, and behind him an Austrian Jew who had been

buying pearls in Margherita was showing his wares to the wife of a Dutch officer returning to Curaçao from a visit to relatives in Surinam, and the two were chattering away in voluble French. Our captain, a fine specimen of a Hollander, was playing chess with an Italian, and the latter was winning, having no ship on the coast and his brain unfilled with plans regarding the securing of a cargo for Havre or Amsterdam. Through the crowd came a stolid Dutch quartermaster, picking his way along the deck to read the taffrail-log, which he did, and returned oblivious to all but the number in his head, as I could see from the moving of his lips as he muttered it over to himself.

Leyden led the way aft to the grating beside the hand steering-gear—the place where we usually held our sessions of swapping experiences. I drew out a fresh cigar and the German lit his big porcelain pipe, an apparatus especially adapted to the needs of the *raconteur,* as one could take a puff or two and

then bank the fire until the next stopping-place.

"It was several years ago," he began. "I had been sent up the Orinoco by an American university, a new one in the Middle West, to which some sausage-maker had given a fortune to build and stock a museum of natural history. The president of the university sent for me; I can never sufficiently admire the capability of this young man for his position. He took me into the museum and showed me at least a kilometer of empty shelves.

" 'This place must be chock-a-block by commencement time,' said he. 'I have four men at work in North America, two in South America, four in Europe——' and so on, all over the face of the earth. 'I wish you to take charge of South America, north of the Amazon. There is a man in the Amazon Valley chasing up the fish and reptiles, and one in Peru, out for mammals. You are to get after the birds and insects; of course, if you should happen to run across anything rare

that's not in your line just gather it in, anyway.' He glanced at some typewritten memoranda. 'That ought to give us an A1 stock of South American goods, and before we get through if we don't have Putney University bluffed off the boards *I'll* go to h——' "

Leyden paused, and I heard his china stove splutter as he laughed softly.

"It was a good outfit, that of mine—the best I have ever had. There were four large boats, with a crew of five men in each. As quantity was required as well as quality, I stocked up as if for a trading expedition. You know, Doctor, natives are themselves born collectors; moreover, an observant savage knows a rare thing when he sees it. I have had a large experience with aborigines and know the capriciousness of their tastes. The objects which one would expect to attract them they often positively refuse to look at, while for something else they are ready to do murder. If a man is fortunate enough to

strike a popular fancy he can buy a whole tribe. And that is what I proposed to do.

"There was a friend of mine in New York, a German, who had traded on the Orinoco, and from him I formed some ideas in regard to trade-stuffs, for, you see, it was my plan to subsidize some tribe and have them doing my collecting while I stopped in camp to pack and preserve specimens. Before leaving New York I went to one of the big wholesale 'notion' stores on Broadway and explained my needs to the superintendent. The first thing which he showed me—as a joke, I believe—was a consignment of fawn-colored opera hats which had been made for some minstrel company which went into the hands of the receiver before the goods were delivered. They were light and folded compactly, and you know how savages delight in elaborate head-gear. I bought three dozen for twenty dollars. Then I bought two dozen harmonicas and two dozen bright jew's-harps. Of course, I got the usual stock goods—fish-

hooks, calico prints, aniline dyes—and finally the proprietor, who had a keen sense of humor, presented me with a case of four dozen old-fashioned iron spectacle frames which contained no glasses. As I wear spectacles myself, I decided that possibly I might set a fashion up in Orinoco, and accordingly took them along."

Leyden paused to turn the forced draught on his tobacco crucible, and in the silence I caught odd snatches of conversation in at least five different tongues: "*Tres pien marche—tres pien marche,*" came the guttural voice of the pearl-buyer. "*Cuanto por la picinia,*" from the Venezuelans, followed by a snigger of that peculiar note that goes with an improper anecdote; a sort of falsetto giggle—everyone knows the kind. Then the captain got checkmated, and swore a good, hearty Dutch oath that sounded strangely clean and honest and wholesome as compared to the staccato fragments on all sides.

"I had my outfit towed up as far as Ciudad Bolivar," Leyden continued. "There I found a German named Meyers, who had a big trading station. He told me in confidence that he was planning to call in his loans, as far as he was able, and leave the country, as the rapacity of the new government made it impossible to carry on a profitable trade. He was a man of about fifty, unmarried, and had lived at least half of his life on the river.

"It happened that my lieutenant, a young German-American named Lefferts, had contracted the fever on the way up the river. He was the son of an old friend of mine in New York, and I had promised to take care of him. You have had some experience in tropical malaria, Doctor. Or perhaps it is not malaria; at any rate, one dies in rather an indecent hurry, and quinine is about as efficient as so much flour. I sent the lad back on the steamer and asked Meyers if he knew of any one with whom to replace him—a white man, of course, as it is always well to

have at least two white men when there are things to steal.

"When I asked the question it seemed to me that Meyers' pale yellow face took on a more lifelike color.

" 'There is a young man in my employ whom you might persuade to go,' said he. 'At present he is keeping the store. I will send for him—but I beg of you not to say a word concerning what I have mentioned in regard to my returning to Germany.'

" 'Certainly not,' said I. Meyers gave an order to a servant, and a few minutes later I saw a broad-shouldered young fellow walking toward the house. Even before he came within hail his striking resemblance to Meyers told me what he was.

"Few men could have told that he was not a German born, and still fewer that African blood flowed through his veins, but my calling is one which demands close powers of observation. His hair was of a light brown, straight, but utterly without lustre; his blue

eyes had a muddy tinge, and his skin, although fair, had that peculiar purple tint of raw meat which one sees in blonds with African corpuscles.

"Meyers explained my needs, and the young man, whose name was Frederick, listened attentively, as I did also, for as the older man talked I became conscious of an odd accent of fear in his voice. Each time that his natural son turned his eyes in his direction Meyers would seem to recoil and his voice would grow faint and irresolute. It did not take me long to see that the trader was in mortal terror of his offspring.

"Frederick listened, as it seemed to me, a bit sulkily, and once or twice gave Meyers a sidelong glance of suspicion, as if he was trying to discover some ulterior motive—which indeed was not lacking, as I very well knew that Meyers would not be there when I returned, and I more than half suspected that Meyers would have left before had it not been for Frederick.

"'What will you pay?' he asked, suddenly, turning to me. I told him.

"'It is not much,' he observed, in a surly voice.

"'I am not urging you to come,' I replied, quietly. 'There is the proposition; take it or leave it.'

"'I will let you know in the morning,' said he, and left us with no salutation.

"When he had gone Meyers turned to me with a weak and somewhat frightened smile.

"'I think that he will go,' said he. 'He is fond of money. Of course'—he smiled in a way that made me want to kick him—'you understand—the—eh—my position——'

"'No'—I answered a bit brutally, I fear—'I don't. If you care enough about him to educate him as you appear to have done, why do you want to desert him?'

"He shrank as if I had struck him, and for a moment seemed on the verge of collapse, then recovered and clapped his hands feebly. A yellow girl, in an unclean pinafore which

rather emphasized the nakedness beneath, flopped out of the house, holding her frock partly together with one hand, and asked what he wanted.

"'Schiedam and bitters—and bring a water-monkey,' he answered. Rather to my surprise, the wench did as she was bid, favoring me with a rather bold stare.

"It was intensely hot—just before the afternoon shower. We were sitting on the raised veranda of Meyers' house, and down below us the river oozed along, viscid and brown and sticky-looking, like molasses flowing out of a stove-in vat. The clouds were banking up black and forbidding on the other side of the stream, and occasionally a rumble of thunder reached us.

"'You do not know—do not understand,' said Meyers, finally. He raised one skinny, mottled hand to his red, untidy beard, which was getting gray around his muzzle, like an old collie, which, in fact, he somewhat resembled. 'Of course, you see the relationship.'

His fingers massaged his lips, a frequent gesture with people of vacillating character. 'I was fond of him as a boy and flattered myself that his negro blood was in no way evident, though his mother was a mulatto—but it was only in process of incubation; it has since shown itself—not physically, but in more sinister manifestations: in the workings of his mind.' He reached for his gin-and-bitters, slopping half of it down the front of his tunic. 'My conscience demands that I should warn you,' he went on, after gulping down his gin and wiping his gray muzzle on his sleeve. 'He is intelligent, and when not crossed his disposition is cheerful and kind—when not crossed, you observe, because it is when his resentment is aroused that the black blood comes all to the surface. At such times he is a fiend incarnate—but there is no reason why in your case any such condition should arise.' He glanced about him nervously, then hunched his chair closer to mine. 'I will tell you something that you would never guess,' said he,

pushing his face toward mine until his gin-soaked bristles almost touched my cheek. 'At times'—his voice dropped to a whisper—'at times I am actually in fear of him!'

"'Do you think that he will accept my offer?' I asked, leaning backward, for the man was getting momentarily more repugnant to me.

"*B'r'r'gh!*" Leyden arose suddenly and, walking to the taffrail, spat into the water. "I can see the fellow yet, Doctor," he said, turning to me apologetically. "He—and his unhealthy, exotic surroundings, that were partly luxurious, partly rotten, like one of those beautiful carnivorous orchids with their wonderful tints and charnel-house odor—mauve and carmine outside and inside full of decaying insects. Meyers was rich, and he had a fine house and a beautiful garden, and European delicacies, and books, and *objets de vertu,* but his setting was poisonous! Mangroves and fever and humid heat—and whenever you went in and out of his place you

would catch a glimpse of slatternly, half-naked native women poking and prying and getting out of the way. Then he would receive you in a limp, unbuttoned sort of a way —you know the type.

"He was of exceptionally good family and a man of highest education, but I fancied that he had pretty well degenerated——"

Eight bells were struck forward, and Leyden paused to strike a match and hold it to the dial of the log. The Dutch captain came aft at the same moment and held the lighted end of his cigar against the dial. He paused to chat with us for a moment, then went forward to see if the youthful mate on the bridge was still awake, for the strain of work is terrific on the coast, and I doubt if the mates had averaged four hours' sleep in the twenty-four for a week.

"Frederick finally decided to accept my offer," Leyden went on, "and the next day we left Bolivar and proceeded up the river. I explained my project to Frederick, who told

me that he knew of a tribe located near the head of one of the tributaries of the Orinoco, whom he had once visited on a trading expedition, and, as I judged that the district should be rich in the material of which I was in search, I decided to visit it.

"It was tedious working up that everlasting stream; hot, too, for there was seldom a breeze, and sometimes it seemed to me that the dome of humidity rising from that sluggish river acted as a lens, or burning glass, to focus upon us the rays of that withering sun. My crews turned out well; a few had the fever, but what surprised me was that Frederick seemed to suffer from the heat more than any of us. Yet he was a useful man—a good driver, although it seemed to me at times that he was unnecessarily abusive.

"Once we entered the tributary, the ——, it was much better, for there we could keep in the shade of the great forest which rose right from the banks. I had already secured quite a number of specimens, and was alto-

gether much satisfied by the way in which things were going.

"One peculiarity of Frederick which I had several times noticed was his personal vanity, a trait which at times made him ridiculous. I had observed the covetousness with which he regarded some of my personal effects, and had given him several trifles, among them a pair of bright yellow leather puttee-leggins, at which his delight was like that of a child. That was the African. The contraptions were too hot for me, too hot for anybody, but Frederick wore them constantly.

"I had not said much about my trading junk, thinking that he might regard me as a business rival, but one evening when we were encamped on the edge of the river I had the case of hats opened, as I had noticed the ants coming out of the crevices and wanted to see if the goods were damaged. I drew one of them out, punched it open, and was examining it, when I happened to glance at Freder-

ick, who was standing near. His eyes were fairly bulging and his loose mouth agape.

"'Why have you those hats, Doctor?' he gasped, in astonishment.

"'Trading stuff,' I answered. 'Do you think that the natives will like them?'

"'The natives! But they are far too good! They are beautiful hats, such as gentlemen wear in the United States, are they not?'

"I glanced at him curiously, and saw that he was looking at that hat as a starving man might look at a loaf of bread. Really, in spite of Meyers having given him what would be equal to a good high-school education, the man was simple as a savage, and he had never been away from the Orinoco.

"'You appear to admire them,' I answered, carelessly; 'perhaps you might like one yourself. They are light, and should be cool.'

"His eyes glistened; he could hardly thank me, he was so pleased. I overhauled the lot until I found one that fitted him, and after

that he wore it constantly, to the great admiration of the native crews.

"A few days later we found the tribe, with whom I immediately opened negotiations. They were remarkably quick in learning what was required of them, and they were pleased with my goods. Especially they admired Frederick, who went about clad in bright yellow puttees, moleskin trousers, a white drill tunic with a military collar, and a fawn-colored opera hat. It seemed to me that the elegance of his attire had some good effect, for he certainly had great authority with those red Indians—more than I.

"Things went on swimmingly for a while; the savages brought me in specimens of every description; my packing cases were becoming filled, and it looked as if, where my part of it was concerned, Billings University might yet have Putney University 'bluffed off the boards.' The interest of the natives had begun to flag slightly, but I had refreshed it by serving out the harmonicas and jew's-harps

—a step which I soon regretted, as my camp became a nightmare of sound. A fortnight later, business becoming slack again, I served out the opera hats, and whipped up their ardor still further by exhibiting the spectacle frames."

Leyden paused and chuckled into his pipe until the sparks spouted from the big china bowl like a roman candle.

"Imagine, Doctor, such a spectacle! I had brought a lot of mosquito netting—pink, it was—and with that I had shown the savages how to make insect nects. Such a sight! Forty or fifty Indians and bush-niggers, some naked except for a fawn-colored opera hat and a pair of iron spectacles without the lenses; others swathed in flaming calico prints, sitting around my camp blowing into a harmonica or a jew's-harp, or sneaking through the jungle with shrimp-pink butterfly net! The very crocodiles used to crawl out upon the banks and laugh! And the natives all so proud and pleased!

"Then one day a few of them came in and said that they had trapped a *maipuri*—a kind of water-tapir—over on the other bank. I took a few men and went over to superintend the skinning of the beast, and while so engaged two of the Indians came rushing up to say that a small steamer was coming up the river.

"It turned out to be a little gunboat. Shortly after we left Bolivar there had been one of the semi-annual revolutions, and the new governor of the district, knowing that I had gone up the river, had come up to see what could be made out of me. The matter could have been arranged peaceably enough had it not been for Frederick. On sighting the steamer the fool had promptly armed the boat crews, and when the people from the gunboat landed near the camp they were confronted by an array of twenty half-caste Caribs, armed with bored-out Springfields, and about two-score of Indians, gorgeously equipped with opera hats and spectacles,

many of them blowing furiously into harmonicas and all armed with bows and spears.

"Those Indians, as you know, are the most harmless people in the world, but the Caribs will fight, and from all I could learn, for I was across the river at the time, that fool of a Frederick went roaring about, making frenzied orations and challenging the Venezuelans to try to land.

"They did land, and at the first volley Frederick rolled on his back, absolutely unhurt, and howled for mercy. The Caribs retreated firing, and managed to kill one of the people from the gunboat and wound three others. I started back the moment I heard the firing, but by that time my allies had been routed, and I was promptly arrested and put down below in double irons.

"They confiscated all of my specimens, stowing them away on the gunboat, took the boats in tow and down the river we went, leaving the Indians and boatmen in the bush. All of my protests were vain; I had been trad-

ing without a license from the government—which did not exist when I went up—in addition to which my people had fired upon government troops, killing a man and wounding others. No appeal to my consul would be permitted; I was no better than a pirate, etc.

"Frederick was chained up near me on the trip down, and he alternated between raving curses at our captors and whimpering like a pup when they cuffed him for it. You see, Doctor, the alien strains were always at work in that man. One minute he was white, the next black. Your French or Spanish or Italian half-caste would have had the cunning that is one of the compensations of the mongrel; but Frederick was in two layers, and sometimes one would be on top and sometimes the other, but they never mixed. It was even so with his personal appearance, for I noticed that when he was in charge of our men he looked the typical German; his features were aquiline, composed, dignified and showed character. On the other hand,

when he was hurt or frightened the actual color of his skin was all that proclaimed him white. His eyes would bulge until the whites were visible all the way around, his forehead crept down, his nose would actually flatten and his lips rolled back in the typical African manner, showing their red linings and the big ivory teeth.

"Before we had reached the mouth of the river he was moping in the usual negro way, and I think that he would have died, as negroes will if their despondency lasts too long, had we been a week longer *en voyage.*"

Leyden ceased speaking and jerked his head irritably toward the fat Italian who had been playing chess with the captain. He had fallen asleep in his chair, and, being a large man, his head had rolled back over the cross-bar. A shaft of light from the "*rook kamer*" fell upon the expanse of pale, flabby throat, stretched tense by the weight of the pendant head, and as I glanced that way it vibrated with strangling, unwholesome noises.

"*Humbert!*" called Leyden, in a soft, feminine voice, then quickly turned his back. The sodden mass convoluted; the noises culminated in a strangling snort; one almost heard the vertebræ creak as the strain came upon them; then he sat up and stared about in bewilderment.

"Nothing like the sound of one's name to wake one, especially in a strange place," chuckled Leyden, softly. "I saw on the passenger list that his name was Humbert." He walked to the taffrail and leaned upon it for a moment, watching the glowing disks of phosphorescence whirled to the surface by the screw. They glowed and faded and then glowed again, to merge finally into a broad band of luminous silver that formed the wake.

"They left my specimen cases at Bolivar," he resumed, talking to the rudder, apparently, "and took us around to Cumana, where they lodged us in the nasty little jail which I will show you to-morrow, if we are permitted to land. After a month of it—fever and

starvation and vermin" (he scratched his shoulder with a squirm)—"I itch yet when I think of it—after a month of all this I became *ennuyé* and decided to leave." His voice grew ominously hard. "So one evening I took Frederick and we came away. Frederick was at pretty low ebb by that time, and it took about three days' skillful jockeying to coax his German blood to the top; but eventually I got it there in sufficient volume to make me think that it would remain for an hour or two —and it did!—long enough to enable him to kill one of the devilish nigger guards with his naked hands. I crushed the skull of another with a jagged piece of rock, and then we wandered down the beach, found a rotten old canoe and paddled out to sea.

"The canoe was half waterlogged, and I knew that it would not carry us very far, so I decided to try and get to Margherita and take our chances on the rest. When the day broke I could just distinguish the outlines of the island, with the usual big cloud hanging

over it. We paddled all day long, without seeming to get any nearer; then Frederick grew sulky all at once and threw down his paddle with the remark that he was going to die.

"'You certainly will,' said I, 'unless you keep at work.' I had filled a water-jug that I found in the canoe before we started, but we had nothing to eat since afternoon of the day before, and what we got then was not of a tissue-building character.

"'I am going to die,' Frederick repeated—and then, confound him, he lay down in the bottom of the canoe and *did* die!"

I grunted—for that seemed to me to be an adequate epitaph for such a person as I fancied Frederick to have been.

"I did not discover it at once," Leyden went on, "but when I did I was rather relieved, as it is harder to share one's nerve with another man than one's food. I slid him over the side of the canoe and kept on with my paddling. Really, Doctor, that day

is an absolute blank. About sunset I struck some of the outlying boats of the pearl divers and the next thing that I remember is waking up and finding myself lying in a nasty little hut covered with flies. I think that it was the smell of the shell-heaps on the beach that brought me to life again. But it was odd about that man Frederick, was it not?—and rather illustrates my theory, don't you think?"

"Never mind your theory," said I. "Tell me the rest of the story."

"That was rather odd, too." Leyden permitted himself a few reminiscent puffs. "The chap that rescued me was a French Jew who controlled quite a bit of the pearl-fishing industry on the island. He was clever enough to guess how I came to be floating about in that hollow log, but made no comment at the time. As soon as I was able to get about again, which was in a couple of days, he asked me if I wished to work for him. I declined with thanks, whereupon he said that in that

case he felt that duty would compel his handing me over to the authorities. Practically, you see, I was his slave, but there seemed no help for it, so for the time being I took command of one of his larger boats and her crew. He gave me some clothes and my food and that was all.

"In the end I got even. One day, when I had landed my cargo of oysters on the beach and was about to begin opening—for you know the pearl fishers down here open the shells instead of rotting out, as they do in the East—an old native woman who had been squatting near the edge of the pile hobbled over to where I was standing and begged for one of the bivalves to eat. They are not bad, you know. I told her to help herself, expecting, naturally, that she would pick one up at her feet; but instead of that she went around to the other side of the heap and selected one there. This struck me as a bit odd; then, as she hobbled off, it seemed to me that she was in some haste to get away. Acting entirely

upon impulse, and with no distinct idea of my motive, I picked up a couple of the oysters and ran after her.

"'Here, mother,' said I, 'take these and give me that one which you have there.'

"She favored me with a look which actually reeked with malice, but, as there was no help for it, handed over the oyster. As I took it I saw my employer—or jailer, to be accurate—walking down the beach from his cabin—for he always superintended the opening of the shells, for very obvious reasons, and I had orders never to begin the work until his arrival. He was still some distance off, so, turning my back to him, I whipped out my knife and slit open the mollusk, and there, right on the very lip, was the largest pearl which I have ever seen on Margherita!

"You see, Doctor, when the oysters are thrown down on the beach the heat from the sun and the hot sand often causes them to open an inch or so. This old woman, who had come down, no doubt, with the purpose of

begging an oyster to eat, was squatting in front of this especial one, and caught sight of the pearl through the slit between the two shells."

Leyden turned to me suddenly. "What would you have done in such a case, Doctor?"

"Exactly what you did, I fancy," I answered.

"Yes," he replied, slowly; "I was justified. This Frenchman was detaining me through blackmail and forcing me to work like a dog for fear of being turned over to the Venezuelans. I kept the pearl and a week later managed to escape to Curaçao on a schooner. There I sold my pearl for eight hundred dollars, and as soon as I had the money I wrote to the gentleman who had broken up my expedition and offered him five hundred dollars for all my effects delivered to me at Curaçao. They came on the next Dutch steamer and were handed over to me by the captain upon my payment of the money. Three weeks later they were gracing the

shelves of the new museum of Billings University and I was on my way to Mexico to collect Aztec relics for the same excellent institution."

## THE SHEARS OF ATROPOS

"ILL you please tell me why it is, Doctor," said Leyden, "that when you and I are foregathered in this part of the ship at this hour of the evening we must immediately proceed to rake the lockers of our recollection for the morbid and anomalous?"

I told him that it was perhaps because the accent of a man's mind was largely influenced by his profession, and that as the morbid was my source of livelihood and his the rare and *sui generis* of Nature, our interests touched these topics.

"*Ach!* there is something in that," said Leyden, "but not all. It is that only in these violent upheavals do we get to see the hidden things of life, the more superficial of which are evident to a man who can translate the

languages of his five senses and has perhaps a dialect or two in reserve."

He was silent for a moment, letting his steady gray eyes rest upon the streaks of phosphorescent spume churned up about us by the stiff following trade. Abeam lay the moonlit isle of Curaçao, so near that one could see the towering yuccas standing sentinels upon the ridges of the broken hills—could almost see the yellow of their blossoms, for this moon gave color as well as perspective.

"This was in Borneo, Doctor," he began abruptly. "I had been sent there on a head-hunting expedition. Odd, is it not, but appropriate! A countryman of mine who was writing a book on anthropology had sent me there to take photographs and notes and measurements and to collect specimens of skulls as I saw fit—attached or unattached, that was my lookout. You know, Doctor, that although the coast of Borneo is occupied by Malays, Bajaus, or Sea Gypsies, Bugis, Chinese and im-

migrants from Polynesia, very little is known of the interior, which is the exclusive domain of the great family of Dyaks, which is itself divided into several tribes. It was of the Punan and Olo-ot, who are fairly pure, that my employer wanted specious information.

"I had taken with me one white man, oddly enough a tourist, a New York lawyer named Lynch, whom I had met in Singapore—a gentleman who had inherited a little money and was taking a trip around the world. A great explorer was lost in that man, Doctor—and there are too many good lawyers already.

"As a rule, I prefer to go into a savage country with no other white man, as once or twice it has been my misfortune to have all of my work undone by the single careless or tactless act of a companion; in the present case I needed an assistant, as I had just come down from the Irawady and was running a temperature which I thought possible the hills of Borneo might develop into a sharp attack of fever.

"I will not attempt to describe our adventures, nor what we found inside the island, for all of that you can read in my patron's book. Eventually we struck the head of a river which, according to my reckoning, would take us down to a little trading port called Bangan, and I had learned from a few friendly natives that there was a missionary station not far below us. I had not known that there were any missionaries in that section; but then, they are universal perennials which one is apt to encounter anywhere.

"We slipped down this rapid stream, and late upon the third day, as we turned into a long reach of the river, saw a clearing at the other end. I was heartily glad, for my fever, which had developed, as I feared, did not yield to medication as it should, and, to tell the truth, Doctor, I did not really believe that I would reach sea-water alive. Lynch was in perfect condition—hard, seasoned, alert—but then, you see, he was not chock full of Irawady microbes when we started, and the coun-

try through which we had passed was not unhealthy.

"He had been of the greatest value to me; three times I owed my life to him that trip. Often he made me laugh by the ease with which he adapted his ultra-modernism to his primitive surroundings, for he was not a man who was used to roughing it. He treated our half-wild Dyaks as if they were the bellboys of his club; appeared to have not the slightest notion in the world that they could so far forget their manners as to become insubordinate; would sometimes relax and joke with them a bit. He would turn his back upon the most dangerous, sleep with both eyes apparently shut, seemed contemptuous of danger or treachery; yet the twice that it did occur he had anticipated it. Between us we were an efficient combination, for I am governed by instinct, Doctor; Lynch acted only from coldly wrought logic.

"To continue: We arrived at this clearing and were surprised to find near the edge of

the bank a new stockade; the gum was still oozing from the stakes. To the right were some long, low buildings, of which I did not like the look. These also were very new—in fact, still in process of construction—and as I examined them through my glass I discovered some bungling contrivances hanging from a projecting rafter.

"'Neck-yokes,' said I to Lynch. 'We have stumbled on a slaver!'

"'Here comes a white man,' he replied. There were a few natives watching us from the top of the bank, and through these there came a man of huge stature, with a rough, red beard and dressed in a suit of embroidered silk pajamas. The people wilted away from him as he approached, then fell in behind, walking with the curious drop-kneed gait of bush-folk the world over when ill at ease. This giant strode to the edge of the bank and stood glaring down without a word.

"'Good evening,' observed Lynch, and shoved the canoe to the bank.

"'Where are ye from?' said the fellow, with a rough Caledonian accent, and staring down with his red beard thrust out and his small, pale eyes watching us suspiciously. His sleeves were rolled up to the elbow and his huge forearms, covered with shaggy hair, were folded across his bulging chest.

"'From the other side of the island,' said Lynch. He stepped out on the bank as if he had been invited and proceeded to moor the canoe.

"'What's this ye're doin'?' growled the red-bearded giant above him. His great arms had dropped to his side and one could see how the thick muscles held them with bent elbows.

"'Hitching the boat,' replied Lynch, indifferently. He did so, and walked to the top of the bank.

"'Whose house is that?' he asked.

"'The hoos is mine,' growled the man, and 't is no tavern I'm keepin'—d'ye see?'

"'Oh, I quite understand that,' said Lynch,

pleasantly. 'Of course, you wish us to be your guests.' He turned to me. 'Doctor,' he said, 'this gentleman wishes us to stop the night with him.' He turned to the other. 'Very decent of you, I'm sure, especially as my friend has a touch of the fever and ought to rest up a bit.' He proceeded to direct the unloading of the canoes, even calling some of the red man's retainers to assist.

"The face of the fellow was purple, but it seemed as if Lynch's assurance had robbed him of speech. He stood glowering like a great Guernsey bull, while Lynch went back and forth about him as if he had been an obstructing tree.

" 'You see, we are naturalists,' Lynch began, talking as he worked. 'Some of these boxes contain trade-stuffs, but most of them are full of heads—skulls, you know, very interesting—I will show you some if you like. I suppose your people are honest? I fancy this stuff will be safe right here where it is. Hi!'—he relapsed into the dialect, and before

I knew what was going on two of the boys had me up the bank.

" 'Permit me to introduce Dr. Leyden; I am Mr. Lynch,' said this extraordinary lieutenant of mine; 'and now, sir, if you will lead the way——'

" 'Ye're takin' a deal for granted,' began the man in a surly voice.

" 'I'm taking it for granted that you are the missionary,' said Lynch, calmly. 'If you are not, it really makes no difference. No white man could help being glad to accommodate two other white men in a place like this, and, although you do not keep a tavern, perhaps we can render you some service in return for your hospitality. We have more firearms than we will need——'

" 'Ye're verra kind,' growled the man, but I saw his pale, swinish eye lighten a bit, and guessed that Lynch, with his usual tact, had touched him. 'Of course, I'll gie ye a lodgin' for the night, though I've little to offer strangers.' He walked sullenly ahead, Lynch fol-

lowing him, and I noticed that, although my companion was a tall, well-built man, the other topped him by half a head and the breadth of a hand across the shoulders. I do not think that I have ever seen a more powerful brute—all bone and muscle, and something in the shiftiness of his pale, cunning eye told me that he was not without a corresponding share of guile.

"As we drew near to the stockade I saw that it was quite new, and then Lynch reached behind him and pinched my foot as I lay on the stretcher, and, would you believe it, Doctor, on every sharpened stake that formed the front of the stockade there was a *human head!* They had been there varying lengths of time, I judged, but the—eh—evidences of the recency of some were quite apparent.

" 'I see that you go in for heads a bit yourself, Mr. Cullen,' said Lynch, in his pleasant voice, but hardly was the name between his lips when this hairy giant of ours wheeled on

him like a boar. You know the stiff, muscle-bound motion, Doctor: the swift sling of the rigid body all on one axis, the great, brutish head swung on its thick neck, the mean little eyes slanting up evilly. That is what this hairy brute was, a boar, with all of the cunning and surly moroseness of this animal. There was something horribly brutish in the swing of his shock head between the hulking shoulders as he turned on Lynch, and something horribly sinister in the yellow glint of his teeth between the bristling, red mustache, which seemed to roll upwards like that which one sees on the headpieces of ancient Japanese armor. If he had turned to me like that I would have presented him with the muzzle of my pistol—*Ach!*—and very possibly the bullet as well, for the secret of long life in my profession is to take no chances. I could not see, however, that Lynch moved a muscle, except to smile.

"'Where got ye that name?' snarled the man. His beard was thrust almost into

Lynch's face, and I could see the twitching of his thick fingers.

"'On the collar of your pajamas,' said Lynch, calmly. 'Do you observe, Doctor,' he continued, turning to me, 'that some of these skulls are quite different from any we have secured? Possibly our host might be willing to exchange——' He turned to survey the exhibit with interest. 'What a Golconda it is, to be sure!' cried my New York lawyer, enthusiastically. 'You are to be complimented on your collection, Mr.—eh—eh——'

"'McAdoo,' supplied the red man, sulkily, but with a strange quaver in his voice. I glanced up at him quickly, then looked away and at the stockade, for the glimpse I had of his face told me that the burly ruffian had received a fright. He could not have been pale, even if he had been dead, but there was a look in his eyes that meant fear, yes, and meant murder, too, for a beast of that sort cannot become frightened without becoming homicidal at the same time.

"'Ye're very obsairvin',' he managed to say, in a thick voice.

Lynch turned and regarded him benevolently.

"'You are very modest, Mr. McAdoo,' he replied, genially. 'You really have a noteworthy collection here.'

"'They were folk not wanted here,' retorted McAdoo, with what I could see was a considerable effort. And then he gathered himself together for a supreme stroke—the one heavily delivered blow of this round; and yet, do you know, Doctor, in spite of the man's overwhelming physical force and ominous aspect, there was something rather ridiculous in his manner of delivering this last menace—something of the lout of a schoolboy who defies his pedagogue, although he half believes that there may be a thrashing behind it; defies him because his nature is too churlish and too abundant in a swinish sort of courage, born of the sense of a potent vitality, to feel the fear of the result, appreciable to a crea-

ture of the same courage but a higher power of imagination.

"'*Maybe ye'd like to add to this same collection,*' he said, and he said it with one mental arm raised toward, in a manner of speaking.

"Lynch laughed outright. It might have been a part of his—what you Americans call *bluff*, but I believe that it was sheer amusement. I began to be convinced that Lynch possessed a very keen sense of a very dangerous sort of humor. He saw the thing just as I saw it; of course he would see it so, because, although I was a trifle slow in discovering it, he had put this man 'McAdoo' on the witness stand the very moment he heard him speak, and he was cross-examining him and deriving infinite amusement from the process. Moreover, McAdoo himself, while too coarse-grained to understand it, was beginning to *feel* it, and there grew to be in his manœuvres something of the sweating nervousness of a horse at the howl of

a far-distant wolf; yet his ears were well back.

"'That's just exactly what we want to do, McAdoo,' he answered, and it almost seemed as if he was going to pat the ruffian on the shoulder, 'but we want to take a head or so in return.' He smiled genially into the wicked face, and actually *turned his back* upon the man and walked in through the gate as if entering the compound of an old friend. Perhaps something told him that I had a hand on the butt of my revolver.

"Once inside the stockade Lynch pushed matters; in fact, he carried it to the verge of spoiling everything; but, you see, Doctor, if this McAdoo had possessed the wit of a cockroach, or had been a little more lacking in that hereditary feudal instinct which made him uncomfortable in spite of himself in the presence of a gentleman, he might easily have slipped away and arranged our assassination, and this was precisely what Lynch did not intend that he should do. He told me after-

wards that, like *Javert* in 'Les Miserables,' he was born with an instinct for a criminal, but I do not credit this particularly, as I myself could deduct that this man McAdoo had more reason than mere surliness of disposition for not wishing us to stop at the mission-house. You see, it had to be a mission; it was either that or a fort; there was nothing there for which to trade.

"All of this had entered my mind, just as it had Lynch's; but, although apparently careless, Lynch was in reality a painstaking man.

"We had entered the stockade, an enclosure of some size, in the middle of which stood a bungalow, which had once been pretty and which was evidently far older than the structure surrounding it. There was not a soul in sight, yet one had the feeling of furtive eyes peering from behind slanted jalousies. Lynch looked about him critically.

" 'Quite like an Australian ranch-house, is it not, Doctor?' he remarked; then turned

sharply to our host. 'Have you ever been in Australia, friend McAdoo?'

"One could see the man's heavy jowl drop a trifle beneath his coarse, red beard; his face looked flaccid—just for the second, and then the blood came pouring back until the veins across the side of his forehead became distended. His pale, little eyes began to dance, just as those of a hog when he is about to make a rush—you know the look.

" 'Where is Mr. Cullen—the missionary?' asked Lynch, sharply, and at this direct question the congestion of McAdoo's face faded in blotches and the glitter of his eyes changed to a gleam of cunning.

" 'He's gone away, leavin' me in charge o' the station, and now if ye'll kindly step inside'—the brute actually mustered a sort of grin which was, no doubt, intended for an expression of good-will—'I'll leave ye for a minute or two.'

" 'Thank you,' said Lynch, calmly. 'Doctor Leyden will wait here on the veranda, but I

believe that I will go with you, if you don't mind. I should like to look around a bit.'

"'There's little enough to see,' growled McAdoo, but his tone was growing wary. 'I'll ask ye to bide here for a bit.'

"'Thanks,' said Lynch, and there was actually a sing-song tone of sarcastic *ennui* in his voice, 'but I've conceived such a fondness for your society that I really can't bear to have you out of my sight, friend McAdoo. We'll go together; the Doctor does not mind being left alone.'

"This to that desperado whom we both believed to be an escaped Australian convict, whose presence in the mission-house was still to be explained. Lynch was armed, of course —armed with one of the big revolvers your cowboys carry, and, in fact, he had been a plainsman for a while after leaving college, and I knew that, for all his languid air, if McAdoo laid a hand on the butt of either of the two revolvers which he carried he would be a dead man before the weapon was half-drawn,

for Lynch was a master of your Western American art of lightning extermination. It did not seem to me, however, that this would help matters much, as I had seen that the man kept a swarm of Malays about him; and Malays, even when ill-treated, are apt to be faithful brutes, if the master who ill-treats them inspires their respect, as no doubt McAdoo must, or he would have been dead long before.

"McAdoo did not permit himself another exhibition of badly suppressed rage; the situation was growing too serious for such petty self-indulgence. Instead, he assumed an air of awkward good-nature, which was far more sinister.

" 'Please yourself,' said he, and walked away toward the gate, with Lynch walking at his side; this time, however, I observed that my companion went out *last*.

"When they had disappeared I entered the silent house. My fever would not mount until late in the evening, and in the meantime, though very weak, I was able to

get about. I went into the first room, which appeared to be a library and living-room. I had been in hundreds of such rooms in mission-houses the world over. The same classic pictures, the same neat rows of classic and unread books, and the same little heaps of much-read periodicals from 'home.' Then there were the local curios draped over the photographs of smug-faced relatives. Everything was in perfect order; there had been little traffic in that room since the—departure of the former occupants.

"I passed from that to a room beyond, which I saw at a glance had been the missionary's study. There was here the same hushed waiting. One of the drawers was half-opened and there was a sharp line of dust across the papers within. There was a native-made waste-basket, half-filled, and on top was an envelope with an English stamp addressed to 'Rev. R. M. Cullen.'

"A man of method, as the order of his effects proclaimed him to be, would never have



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left his house without putting away his personal effects, Doctor, so I decided to rummage. I knew that missionaries invariably kept journals, for the sake of subsequent writing, if nothing else. I reasoned that this diary would be in the desk, probably under lock and key, so I tried the different drawers and found one of them locked. When I had pried it open with my hunting knife I found the journal."

Leyden paused to light a fresh cigar, which I knew would go out after the first three puffs. Some of the smoke must have found its way into his trachea, for he coughed once or twice before proceeding.

"I am a hardened old campaigner, Doctor, and I have never had much sympathy with missionaries, who have usually impressed me as inspired asses, but I will confess that as I read the poor chap's journal my throat swelled until it was difficult to swallow. Perhaps it was because I was weakened by my fever; at any rate, I must confess that when

I had finished it the tears were pouring down my face. It was the record of a Christian hero, Doctor, a Christian martyr as well, as I discovered on reading the record of the last four days.

"First, there had been three in the family—the missionary, his wife and a daughter, who, as I read on, I discovered to be a deaf-mute. Within the last year the wife had died, and not long after her death McAdoo had come up the river, 'prospecting,' as he said. At this time the missionary was planning to return to England.

"McAdoo had remained a month with the missionary, during which time their relations had grown 'somewhat strained.' He had then departed, as Mr. Cullen hoped, for good, but *only a fortnight* before our arrival, Doctor, he had returned with the news that there was a trading schooner at the mouth of the river, and that the captain had agreed to give Mr. Cullen and his daughter a passage to Batavia, whence they could take a steamer to Amster-

"So I discovered a few moments later," muttered Leyden. "The woman led me to a hut a hundred yards behind the bungalow—a well-furnished hut; I think it may have been the mission hospital—and there I found the daughter, the deaf-mute——"

Leyden's voice had dropped until it was almost inaudible. I could not see his face in the dark, but I shivered.

"Of course," he went on, in a careless sort of way, "I could talk with her, for, although my ten modern languages and some twenty dialects all are spoken with the mouth, there is one dialect which is universal—and that is spoken with the eyes. We had a little conversation in this tongue, and then I sat down beside her and patted her hands and made her actually smile. They are simple folk—those on whom the hand of God has been heavy in this regard. Perhaps they are above these mundane things—but at the time I did not look at it in this way. Instead I went back to the bungalow and waited in some impatience

for the return of Lynch and McAdoo—and, will you believe it, Doctor—just at this time, when I needed myself the most, these accursed *plasmodia malariæ,* or whatever kind of species of *fission-fungi* it may be, began to start their segmentation, and segregation, and proliferation in my blood vessels, and I could feel the delirium creeping up my spine to my brain, just as some poor devil of a Passamaquoddy might have felt the fifty-foot rise of the Fundy tide creeping up *his spine* when some coterie of tribal enemies had staked him out on the flats at low water—except that in his case it was cold and in mine it was red-hot!

"I had not long to wait, however. Back they came, McAdoo sullen but studious, and Lynch smiling and talking as if he were the honored guest. I noticed that his holster was unbuckled, however, and while he had been away I had entertained no fears for his safety—because, you see, I had heard no shot. Our co-operation was really quite admirable!

" 'Lynch,' said I, and it seemed to me as if my voice came from a very great distance—the fever, Doctor, not emotion, I beg you to believe; I was never more composed mentally in my life. 'Lynch,' said I, 'will you and Mr. McAdoo kindly come into the library—there are some matters which I wish to discuss with you both.' It was growing dark then, so I clapped my hands, quite softly, but a servant flittered out of the shadow like a bat. The tension was high in that bungalow that night.

" 'Bring lights,' I said in the vernacular.

" 'And food?' suggested Lynch.

" 'The food can wait,' I muttered, fighting hard against the inclination to sleep—to drowse—to be let alone, to enjoy my intoxication in peace. 'Come into the parlor!' I said, and Lynch told me afterwards that my manner was as snappish as a dog with distemper.

" 'After you, friend McAdoo!' said Lynch, rhymingly, and the accursed jingle got caught up in the swirl of ideas racing through my

fevered brain, so that while I talked I kept hearing over and over, 'After you, friend McAdoo—after you, friend McAdoo—after you' —*b'r'rgh!* What is more frightful than trying to do mental work in the face of a delirium?

"I am not clear as to just what McAdoo said; it was Lynch who made the opening move, and this time he did not say, 'After you, friend McAdoo!' He drew his revolver and waved McAdoo to a large lounging chair. I shall never forget that chair; it was a home-made, or rather a native-made chair like those one sees to-day, with a back the angle of which is regulated by a rod behind, which is dropped into notches—you know the kind. At the top there was a little pillow for the head to rest against—a little 'baby-blue' pillow—and it was hollowed in the middle where poor Cullen's head had rested, and worn until the fabric held in a streaky sort of way that showed the white beneath. It was probably made in England by some girl parish-

ioner, and there was something in its homeliness that made me feel as the diary had.

"It was crushed beneath McAdoo's great shoulders as he sank into it—and he *did* sink, Doctor, as if he had been hamstrung. In the middle of the room there was a little bamboo table, on which the servant was about to set the lamp, but Lynch motioned to place it on a shelf behind him. He himself sat at the table, facing McAdoo, his back straight, as the back of a thoroughbred should be, and the revolver lying in his hand near the middle of the table.

"I walked up to him, staggering a little, and threw down the diary.

" 'What is this?' asked Lynch.

" 'After you, friend—the diary of the Rev. R. M. Cullen! What do you think it is—a skull?' I snapped. He raised his eyebrows.

" 'There is a divan at the end of the room, Doctor,' he said, without taking his eyes from McAdoo. 'Lie there, if you please, during our proceedings.' There was a cold, official

note in his voice which seemed to recall the shuffle of heavy feet, whispers, whimpers, somnolence on one side of the room and nerves stretched like the strings of a violin on the other. Dulled as I was, I could see that it brought back something to McAdoo, for it was at these very first words that he began to slump—doubly armed from the start as he had been, surrounded by his servants and in the house which he had claimed as his own.

"Then Lynch began to read—intently and with no apparent thought of the man opposite him. I had sunk in a heap on the divan, deliciously relaxed—leaving it all to Lynch, and humming, 'After you, friend McAdoo,' to myself, as I thought, until Lynch remarked, coldly: 'Doctor, kindly refrain from interrupting the reading of the testimony.' Then I subsided, very much embarrassed.

"*Ach!* how I see it now, Doctor, just as I saw it then; as if I was standing apart—a fourth person regarding the other three:

Lynch with the light behind him, his face in the shadow, carefully reading the journal and apparently oblivious to the fully armed giant who appeared to have shrunk on sinking into the chair of his late victim; apparently oblivious to me also as I lay muttering on the divan at the other end of the room, and rousing myself at longer intervals, as the conflagration within my veins gained headway. The servant in placing the lamp upon the shelf had moved a little clock, which had run down, and the jar had set it ticking, and this and the sharp rustle as Lynch turned the leaves were the only noises in that room—unless my mutterings were audible, which may have been.

"Such a fever as mine is like a fire, Doctor; it leaps upward, then sinks, flickers, smoulders for a while, and then bursts out to rage with fresh fury. It was in one of these lapses, one of these returns almost to the normal, that Lynch finished his perusal.

"I opened my eyes as he laid down the

journal with a smart slap. Lynch had turned half-way in his chair, and the yellow light threw out in sharp profile his straight brow, short aquiline nose and firm legal mouth and chin. There is a forensic type, just as there is any other type, and this was Lynch's, except that there was to him an element of the terse and martial rather than the parliamentary. His revolver was lying in the center of the table, and his sinewy hands were in front of him, just beneath his chin, the finger-tips touching, the elbows on the arms of his chair.

"McAdoo was in the same position—the position of the rabbit confronted by the stoat; shoulders hunched, head sunk, muscle-heavy arms hanging limp outside the arms of the chair, utterly relaxed, yet held half-bent by the tonic contraction of the biceps, and so utter was this relaxation that the hands seemed swollen, the veins on the dorsum stretched to bursting. His bloodshot eyes were fastened on the revolver in front of him, which was nickeled and

threw the limpid lamp-light from its separate planes in steady tongues of flame. Perhaps it was this that held him—the hypnosis, the somnambulizing of the optic nerve.

"'Where is the daughter of Robert Cullen?' asked Lynch, crisply. McAdoo started; his great head was raised with a jerk of such suddenness that one could almost hear the creak of the cervical vertebræ. And his voice! Ah! it was ridiculous. You have heard the whistle of this steamer, Doctor, when on entering a port the cord is pulled while the whistle is still filled with the water of condensation? It was such a noise.

"'Where is the daughter?—answer me, man!' said Lynch, sharply.

"I clapped my hands and one of the soft-footed women slithered to the door of the room. It was the same who had taken me to the deaf-mute girl.

"'Bring your mistress hither,' said I. The woman vanished.

"Our speech had brought a change in Mc-

Adoo. The lusterless look had left his eyes, and even in my benumbed condition I detected a twitching of his thick fingers.

"'After you——' I began, thickly, then realized that I was talking nonsense, but Lynch also had seen the movement. His hand fell upon the revolver.

"'If you move a muscle you are a dead man, friend McAdoo,' he said, softly. 'I fear that you are no better than a dead man as it is—but I should advise you not to bring the matter to a climax until all of the evidence is in.'

"We waited in silence; even the clock had stopped its ticking; the journal was lying on the table. Lynch, I remember, was twisting the ends of his wiry mustache with his free hand. Perhaps the tension had cleared my head; perhaps the drugs, taken, as usual, four hours before the paroxysm was due, were beginning to act; at any rate, my mind was active—abnormally so.

"The crisis had passed with McAdoo; he

was no longer held by shock, surprise, rage, the psychic force of the man in front of him, or the hypnotizing force of the shining weapon. The little bullet *in* the weapon was all that held him now—and I do not think that it would have held him long—in that position, for he had the pluck of a pig, and his eyes were beginning to dance again, when there was a rustle in the doorway and a white-clad figure paused on the threshold.

"I looked at her face—and the sight of it chilled the fever in my blood and whipped the mist of delirium from my brain. When I had seen her before it had been the face of a beautiful child—a frightened, wretched child—but now it was different, matured. Lynch saw it, too—just the swiftest glance, and then his keen eyes flew back to the man, who was only awaiting his opportunity. Afterwards I learned that Lynch possessed the science of the sign language practiced by these folk; he possessed also the science of developing upon his brain an instantaneous photograph taken

with the eyes, and *this* science made the first unnecessary, for you see, Doctor, the girl was looking at her father's murderer—and who knows what beside! Ah, how true it is, as you said a little while ago, that the horror reflected from the eyes of another is far more dreadful than the thing itself!

"Lynch made a movement of dismissal with his hand—a judicial gesture which told me that it was over; the verdict rendered; sentence pronounced. But I was puzzled for the next—eh—step.

" 'Take her back,' I said to the servant.

" 'Dr. Leyden,' said Lynch, 'do you feel that you are in possession of your faculties?' My head was roaring like a cataract, my skin like ice, and my bones were smouldering coals, but my brain was clear—for the moment—too clear.

" 'Quite,' I answered—'in so far as this man is concerned.'

" 'What is your opinion? What course would you advise in the matter?'

"'I would advise shooting him,' said I. 'He requires to be shot, and I do not think that we should waste much time about it. If you do not care to shoot him, I will do so myself,' I added. Personally, his death was necessary to our safety in a way, yet that did not occur to me. I was thinking of the diary, the little blue pillow and the deaf-mute girl.

"'It makes no difference,' said Lynch, and his hand tightened on the stock of the revolver; then he suddenly paused—and I guessed why.

"'She cannot hear,' I said. 'She is deaf.'

"'That is so—I overlooked the fact,' softly.

"McAdoo was watching Lynch in a fascinated way—and I was watching McAdoo. When the report came he pitched forward, and I scrambled to my feet and rescued the little blue pillow."

Leyden was silent—and so was I. He did nothing, said nothing, but we both sat and watched the growing lights in the sea, the increase in the phosphorescence as the moon set.

"It was really a very simple matter," said Leyden, lightly, "and it has always been a source of satisfaction to me. It was all so sensible; so many fools would have wanted to give the brute a chance. Lynch had the right idea; he did not even invite any closing remarks; the only one that was really apropos was made by his Colt, and was quite unanswerable.

"Would you believe it, Doctor, the people were sufficiently Christianized to regard the whole thing as a visitation. Not a soul was in sight when we left, taking the girl with us. Lynch himself conducted her back to England and placed her in an institution.

"Yes—the trip was a success. My anthropologist thought so, I thought so, Lynch thought so, and I have not the slightest doubt that the semi-civilized Dyaks, who still slip through the shadows and peer between the jalousies of the ruined mission-house at the thing which is, perhaps, still held in that ample chair, think so as well."

## ROSENTHAL THE JEW

EYDEN and I paused in our conversation and, leaning our backs against the steamer's rail, listened in some amusement to an argument between a group of our fellow-passengers. That is to say, I was thoughtless enough to be amused; Leyden listened with his usual quiet consideration.

At Paramaribo there had taken passage for New York a wiry little Jew named Gonzalez. He was a cheerful little man, who was pleasing from his sincere politeness. The other passengers, especially the Dutch, had rather made a butt of his provincialism, and it seemed to me that their attitude toward him was edged with a bit of malice. Apparently they resented his claim as a fellow-countryman.

The argument grew warmer; I could not follow it, as they spoke Dutch, but it was easy to see that Gonzalez was growing angry; the others were laughingly sarcastic. Presently the Jew, whose shrill voice had risen in key, said something bitter and walked rapidly away, and as he passed us I saw that his thin face was working with emotion. The others frowned; one gave a short laugh, then looked at us a bit sheepishly. Leyden made a little gurgle in his throat, a sound which carried disapproval. I glanced at him inquiringly.

"They are baiting him because he claims to be a Dutchman," said Leyden. "It is a shame; he is a good little man. He told me yesterday why he was going to New York. It seems that he has a half-sister with Pott's disease of the spine, and he is going to consult a specialist to determine whether anything can be done for her, also how much it will cost. Probably there is not a person on this ship whose errand is so unselfish. *Ach!* They are a much maligned people, the Jews!"

For several moments he drew vigorously at his big porcelain pipe. "Doctor," he asked, presently, "did you ever meet Isidore Rosenthal?"

"No," said I. "Who is he?"

"A Jew, a power in the West Indies. This little chap reminds me of him—because he is so different. There are three people in the West Indies who are worth knowing. One is Mallock, another is Arjolas and the third is Isidore Rosenthal."

Leyden stirred the ashes of his pipe, while I waited. Gonzalez, who passed near me, had swallowed his pique and was talking in bad English to a Portuguese adventuress. "Yes, Madame," he was saying, "I have traveled a great deal. I have been to Demerara, to Trinidad and to Venezuela. Now I am going to New York. If a man has the means it is his duty to travel; he should see the world, improve his mind—and I, I have the means. I own a chemist's shop in Paramaribo——"

"Rosenthal," said Leyden, "is a Czechian

Jew, the most malignant type; aggressive as a hotel child. When he dies, if the Hebrew heaven is not up to his ideas, the Christians will have a hard time to keep him out of theirs. He is a big-boned, muscular, hairy brute, with the push of a peccary and the vitality of a dose of Chagres fever. His present occupation is selling the Santo Dominicans expensive things which they don't want. As soon as he gets *all* of their money he will go somewhere else."

"He appears to have qualities," I observed.

"He has—some of them ones with which you would not credit him. We were once involved in an affair, and there are few men for whom I have more respect.

"I first met Rosenthal in Curaçao, where he and his younger brother, Jacob, as poisonous a cripple as ever drew breath, were doing a nice little business which combined gambling and pawnbroking. Their method was this: Having the *entrée* to the select circle of

South American exiles and refugees and conspirators—for you must know that almost every South and Central American revolution is hatched under the protection of the Dutch flag—Jacob, who was rather expert at cards, would manage to start a game. No doubt the play was honest; his policy was neither to lose nor to win a great deal, but simply to keep things moving. In time some one would lose heavily, for Jacob had a talent for drawing the others out and was liberal with cognac and champagne. These South Americans, as you have observed, possess a passion for jewelry; the first thing which your South American who has made a successful financial *coup* will buy is a gem; on the other hand, when he loses heavily he is open for a good offer on his solitaire or brilliants, and this was Isidore's department. He would manage to be about with some stones to show the winner and ready cash with which to purchase from a loser, or perhaps to negotiate a loan, and he was diplomatic enough to accomplish this

without becoming unpopular. He had a manner of loud and blatant *camaraderie,* was ready to give way in trifles, and I have even known him to loan out a good round sum without any security whatever. He was a friend of the friendless and had the reputation of being honest and liberal.

"Between them the pair should have done very well had Jacob been designed on the large scale of Isidore, but he was not. I think he envied Isidore's physique and manner and popularity, whereas the elder brother loved Jacob devotedly and would nurse him like a mother through his occasional attacks of illness, for one of Jacob's lungs was far gone with tuberculosis. I remember Isidore's boarding the steamer once in Vera Cruz when I was returning from an expedition into Yucatan. It seems that he had heard of my being aboard, and he came to me haggard with watching and worry and told me that he feared that Jacob was dying of fever.

" 'These doctors are a set of fools!' he

cried, in his big, discordant bass. 'They do not know the fever when they see it; they say it is the lung, but I know that it is the fever, also.'

"'But, my dear fellow,' I protested, 'I am not a physician; I am nothing but a collector.'

"'*Peste!*' he answered, for, as he was an Austrian and I a Hollander, we talked in French. 'There is no one who knows more of the pernicious malaria than yourself. Will you come and see the little Jacob?'

"'But I am already overdue with my specimens,' I objected.

"'*Diable!*' he growled. 'What are weeds and stones and ancient rubbish to the life of my dear little Jacob? You shall lose nothing, and if you save his life'—he hauled a chamois bag from some recess of himself and threw a glittering handful of gems upon my bunk—'help yourself; take them all, if you like. Some of them I hold as security, but it makes no difference'—the man grinned—'I get them all in the end.'

"'Put up your ill-gotten gains,' said I, much provoked. 'I'll wait over a steamer and see what I can do because I like your affection for your brother.'

"He grinned again. I got out my microscope and went ashore with him, to find that he was correct. The cripple's blood swarmed with the malarial organisms, but we managed to overcome them. When I came to leave he was quite out of danger.

"It was about six months later that I was in a little hotel in New York much frequented by people from south of the tropic, when who should come in but Rosenthal. I saw immediately that he was in trouble. His big, swarthy, Satanic face was seamed and lined and his shaggy black eyebrows almost hid his fierce green eyes.

"'*Bon jour,* Dr. Leyden,' said he, roughly. 'I heard that you were here and have come to engage your services.'

"'Indeed?' said I.

"'But yes—it is Jacob again. Ah, *mon*

*dieu!'* He broke into violent profanity, and his yellow teeth gleamed from beneath his bristling mustache. 'He is in the prison at Porto Cabello.'

"Personally, Doctor, I thought no doubt that that was precisely where he belonged, but I naturally did not say so to Isidore. Instead I asked him for particulars.

" 'You have heard of "La Fouchere?" ' he snapped, 'the wife of that nigger doctor from Hayti who spends most of his time hanging around the *Moulin Rouge?*'

" 'They are acquaintances of mine,' said I.

" 'The ——!' I will not repeat the term which he applied to the lady, Doctor. 'When I left Curaçao a month ago,' said Rosenthal, 'she was there waiting for the French steamer on her way to Paris. You know she is as white as myself' (as a matter of fact La Fouchere would have made Rosenthal look a Zulu, as the woman's skin was like a piece of paper held against the light) 'and she is as beautiful as sin. Little Jacob must fall in love with

her, like the child he is. They go together to Caracas, and while there she falls in with an old flame, General Trocas, and the two of them plan to get possession of the bag of gems which I left with Jacob while in the States.'

"'Bad business,' said I. 'I know Trocas also.' He was the chap, Doctor, who broke up my Orinoco expedition and landed me in the prison at Cumana.

"'Is it not, *mon cher?* But the little Jacob is no fool; they have had him arrested and searched on a charge of conspiring in Curaçao, but they have been unable to find the gems——'

"'And so have lodged him at Porto Cabello until the stones are forthcoming?'

"'Rather through spite, and it is to get him out that I wish to engage your services, my dear Doctor.'

"'Indeed?' said I.

"'My plan is this,' said Rosenthal. 'The fortress is, as you know, full of political pris-

oners from the last revolution, and, as there is no immediate prospect of another revolution, they are apt to remain there for some time. You know, Doctor'—he grinned at me —'how very poor are the accommodations of these hostelries. I know of a dozen wealthy exiles in Curaçao who would contribute a large sum toward the rescue of their friends. My plan is to quietly raise such a subscription and proceed to Porto Cabello and get the gems, which I will turn over to the commandant of the prison on consideration that he permits the escape of Jacob. You in the meantime will quietly charter a schooner in Curaçao for a scientific expedition, sail across and on a certain night be off Porto Cabello. We will communicate there. The prison guards on that night will be blind to a boat under the sea-wall, and instead of the escape of Jacob alone there will be an escape of *all* of the political prisoners. The subscription of the others will reimburse me for the expense of ransoming Jacob.'

"I reflected for a moment, then asked him if he thought the commandant of the prison would keep his faith.

" 'We must take some chances, of course,' answered Rosenthal. 'For your part, Doctor, there is no risk, and you may name your own figure. Remember that I am already deeply in your debt.'

"I turned the thing over in my mind, Doctor, and it seemed quite a reasonable proposition. You have seen the prison at Porto Cabello; it is on that little sandy island about five hundred yards from the town and only about eighty miles from Curaçao. The prison guards were a lot of shiftless half-breeds and would no doubt be drunk by ten o'clock of the appointed night. Curaçao schooners were always coming and going—on the whole, it seemed no difficult achievement, and it certainly is a commendable act to get any one out of a Venezuelan prison, whether he belongs there or not. I made a bargain with Rosenthal for five hundred dollars, which he

paid me on the spot. The next day we sailed for Curaçao on the Red D.

"There was no difficulty about my part of the programme. I chartered one of the chunky little tubs which you saw in Curaçao, engaged three *Papiemento*-jabbering negroes and a cook and cleared for Porto Cabello, giving it out that I was on a collecting cruise along the coast.

"It took me six days to slam that old tub against the trade to Porto Cabello, about eighty miles in a straight line; weather just as it is now—as it always is down there—the wind dead ahead and blowing the top off the water, and the sky bright and clear and blue. Arrived, I anchored near the mouth of the little inlet, and, after being duly inspected, went ashore to see if I could gather any information; but there was nothing to be learned.

"For a week I hung about that hot, wretched hole; then the Dutch mail steamer arrived from La Guayra, and on going aboard

to greet some old acquaintances the first man I met was Isidore Rosenthal.

"The Jew's Satanic face was more malignant than ever; the glare in his green eyes put one in mind of a jaguar; I saw at once that something had gone wrong.

" 'Ah, the ——!' he snarled, when we were alone. 'You were right, Leyden! The pigs! The robbers! The vile liars!' His rage was positively alarming. His black eyebrows worked up and down, and his yellow teeth gnawed at the corner of his black mustache.

" 'They got your gems?' I asked.

" 'Yes, and they warned me to leave on the next steamer; they would have thrown me into prison but that they feared to have the story get out and be obliged to divide——' He broke off suddenly from his tirade and surprised me by grinning with amusement. 'I should like to see their faces a few days later!'

" 'Whose faces?' I asked, in surprise.

"'Trocas and that ——!' He really had a very poor opinion of 'La Fouchere.'

"'Why?' I asked, although I had my suspicions.

"'Oh, never mind. There are other things to think of. Bribery has failed; there is left only force.' He looked at me inquiringly.

"'Force?' said I, for at that time a Jew and a fight were not associated in my mind.

"'*Tiens!*' said he, 'we cannot return and leave the little Jacob in that cesspool! Think of his lung, my dear Doctor; besides, it would be necessary to refund the money subscribed by our friends in Curaçao.'

"'Did you give them receipts?' I asked, curious to get at the odd principles of the man. He looked at me reproachfully.

"'There, there, Leyden! Did you ever hear of Isidore Rosenthal going back upon his word?'

"'I apologize. What is the next move?'

"Rosenthal shrugged. 'They are not much

to be feared, these nigger guards at the prison.' He glanced at me furtively. 'Suppose we take a boat to-night and go over and get little Jacob?'

"I did not at once reply. To tell the truth, Doctor, I was too much surprised at the suggestion to reply. I knew that Rosenthal possessed the stubborn courage peculiar to his race; but this policy of cold, aggressive daring seemed incompatible with the Hebrew. He watched me narrowly.

" 'I am not a fighter, my dear friend,' said he, thrusting out his hands. 'I am a man of affairs, a financier, a diplomat, but there are times when all of these things fail. No doubt I seem to you like a fool' (he seemed positively ashamed of himself—as ashamed as might another man, a Gentile, of a display of cowardice), 'but what would you have? They will not keep their faith; to offer more bribes would be to throw good money away after bad.' He shrugged, chewed at the end of a cigar, glanced about him furtively, then took

to gnawing his nails, while I sat and considered the proposition.

"To tell the truth, Doctor, it was not at all attractive. To be sure, the guards were a scrubby lot, but there were plenty of them, and the prisoners were locked up and had no knowledge of any plan for escape. Moreover, we did not know in what part of the prison they were confined, nor had we any plan of the inside of the place.

" 'You do not object to making an attempt, Leyden?' asked Rosenthal, who had been watching me narrowly.

" 'Not if I were able to see how it could be done,' I answered, slowly, for, you see, Doctor, he had engaged my services for a particular piece of work and I was professionally bound. If it had been my custom to abandon a project because it was dangerous I must long ago have sought another profession. 'Would it not be much better to wait until we can try to bribe the guards or establish some communication with the prisoners?' said I.

"'No,' he answered. 'It must be done to-night, because Trocas knows with whom he has to deal, and unless I am mistaken there will come an order to-morrow to remove little Jacob, probably to Caracas, and you know he does very badly in the cold, damp air of the mountains; also, the change of altitude is apt to bring out another attack of the fever.'

"'Have you thought of any definite plan?' I asked, irritably. He grinned at me like a baboon.

"'That is for you, my dear Doctor,' said he. 'You have had more experience in such matters.'

"'That is all very well,' said I, 'but you seem to forget that I am engaged by you to carry out *your* orders. Now, go ahead and issue them.'

"His grin left him at this and he began to scowl and reach for the overhang of his mustache with his big yellow teeth. Finally he said: 'I engaged you, as you say, Doctor, to carry out my orders, but I will do better. One

cannot be avaricious when the life of one's brother is concerned. If you will get the little Jacob out of that hole I will pay you three times what you have received.'

"'How about the others?' I asked.

"'Oh, the devil take the others! If their friends want them let them come after them. I will refund their money.'

"'Very well,' said I. 'And now I will go ashore, as I want to think this thing out alone.'

"Rosenthal grinned his sardonic grin, and I left him and, passing through the custom house, strolled on across the square, past the monument to the American soldiers and over into the park opposite the baths, where I sat on a bench and tried to think against the infernal clatter of the *'Q'est ce qu'il dit?'* birds.

"For about an hour I sat there, and I can assure you, Doctor, that my brain was not idle. There were several very potent reasons for my wishing to carry through the task which I had undertaken. In the first place I

needed the money very much. Again, there was an old score to settle with Trocas, but I think that more than all it was a matter of professional pride. It was easy to see that Rosenthal was confident that I could carry the thing through, yet try as I did I was obliged to dismiss each plan as impracticable. If word could be got to the prisoners of our co-operation it would have been so much easier, but I was afraid to bribe any of the guards, as there was danger that he would pocket the money and then betray us.

"I was determined that there must be no bloodshed. I had no doubt that Jacob *had* been conspiring against the Venezuelan government and had been betrayed by 'La Fouchere.' I am averse to killing people, Doctor; moreover, I am a Christian and believe in God, and I try to keep the ten commandments. In spite of the hazardous character of many of my expeditions you would be surprised to learn how very few men I have been obliged to kill or have killed, and the memory

of these unfortunate affairs is attended with regret, but no remorse.

"While I was vexedly working at this problem I heard the blare of a discordant bugle and a clatter on the pavement of the square, and, looking over my shoulder, saw a company of dusty soldiers stacking their arms in front of the café. They appeared to be mostly Venezuelans. They promptly swarmed into the café, and I arose and strolled over in that direction. The lieutenant in command was a short, fat young fellow, and as I drew near he said a few words to his sergeant and then left his company and walked over toward the café of the bathhouse. I followed him indolently, and as he entered the building I took a chair on the verandah and called for spirits and cigars. As I was lighting one of the latter my lieutenant came out, glanced at me inquiringly, then seated himself at a table. A moment later some tourists from the Dutch ship, killing time as best they might, strolled up, and to these I bowed casually as to acquaint-

ances of the voyage. They did not know me, of course, but they returned my bow, called for beer, drank it and strolled on. As they were leaving I remarked in English to one of them, apparently an American:

"'The ship does not sail until night, does she?'

"'Not until one o'clock,' he replied, agreeably, no doubt taking me for a passenger from Porto Cabello.

"For awhile we sat in silence; then my lieutenant, who evidently found himself greatly bored, turned to me and said, in fair English:

"'You are a tourist, sir?'

"'Yes,' said I, 'and much regretting that this is the last which I shall see of Venezuela for many months.' There promised to be some truth in the last part of this statement, Doctor.

"'You enjoy Venezuela?' inquired the officer, evidently pleased.

of the lieutenant. Then I crossed the square to where the *commando* was still drinking. I found the sergeant in the dirty little café, himself somewhat intoxicated. At sight of me he sprang to his feet with an oath.

"'Silence!' said I, in Spanish. 'Your lieutenant has persuaded me to take his place for a few hours.'

"'Where is he?' demanded the sergeant, suspiciously.

"I gave him a drunken leer and slapped him lightly on the shoulder.

"'Can you not guess?' I asked, meaningly.

"'But it cannot be,' growled the man. 'And who are you? It is as much as his commission is worth!'

"'It would be worth more than his commission was worth if he were to accompany his command in his present condition,' I snapped. 'You do not seem to understand that I am doing him a favor at a personal risk; also, he told me to give you this and to tell you to keep your mouth shut.' And I

slipped some gold into his hand. 'It is only necessary for me to cross to the fort, deliver the command to the *commandante* and return. Your lieutenant is not known to any one there.'

"The fellow wavered, grumbled, slid the money into his pocket, eyed me suspiciously; but I laughed and told him that a good sergeant must stand by his lieutenant; then, rising, I told him to get his men together and I would return directly to get them to the fort. Although by no means satisfied, he made no protest, not knowing just what course to take. I left him and walked around the far side of the park to where Rosenthal was waiting.

"He laughed softly as I joined him, and his yellow teeth gleamed in the dusk. I simply told him to have the boat lying off the sea-wall of the prison until he heard from me, and then returned to the *commando,* which was drawn up in a somewhat vacillating formation. The men no doubt took me to be an officer of the garrison to which they were com-

mitted, but the sergeant was very ill at ease.

"I put the column into motion and marched them down to the water, where I requisitioned the nearest boats at hand and we crossed to the island. At the gate of the fortress we halted until the arrival of the officer of the guard, to whom I presented the papers which were in the pocket of the lieutenant's blouse.

"The officer was a dangerous-looking old fellow, apparently a thorough soldier, and, while polite, I could see that he was somewhat disgusted at my condition.

" 'At what time did you arrive in Porto Cabello?' he inquired, a trifle coldly.

" 'An hour ago—perhaps two,' I answered. 'There seemed no great hurry; it was very hot and my men were in need of refreshments. Also, I had some messages from my uncle, his Excellency the President, for some friends upon the *Hollandez.*'

"His manner changed a trifle. He gave a few orders to the sergeant, who marched off

his unsteady company, with a backward glance in my direction, which I affected not to see.

"'Will you come up to the headquarters?' he said. I thanked him and we strolled off together.

"Before we had reached headquarters I had restored his good nature, told him some good stories, made him laugh heartily and evidently convinced him that I was a careless good fellow and not to be taken too seriously. I declined any refreshment, saying that I had been entertained aboard the ship, and after a rather dull evening I begged leave to retire.

"As soon as he was gone I slipped out into the enclosure. It was a starry night, still, but with no moon. I lit a cigar and walked leisurely toward the casemates fronting the sea. At the end of fifty yards I came upon a sentry sleeping peacefully against the wall. Walking to him, I shook him roughly by the shoulder. He awoke with a start; then, seeing an officer before him, scrambled to his feet and

saluted. At the same moment there came from one of the casemates a fit of violent but muffled coughing.

"'Is this the sort of watch which is kept in the prison?' I demanded, roughly. 'His Excellency, my uncle, would be pleased to hear of it.'

"The man was badly frightened. He stammered something about not being asleep; then, as I peered into his face, I recognized him as one of the men of my command.

"'Ah, my friend,' said I, in an altered tone, 'you are one of those who arrived to-day?'

"'Yes, *Señor Capitan,*' he answered.

"'But that is different,' said I, kindly. 'How is it that you are on duty? There has been some mistake. I gave orders that you were to have a night's sleep. There has been a mistake, but never mind, sleep here, if you like; God knows you have reason to be tired, and that there are three times men enough to guard a handful of miserables.'

"'Thank you, *Señor Capitan,*' he an-

swered; and as he spoke, the violent coughing broke out again from some dark recess.

"'There is a poor wretch who seems very ill,' said I, conversationally. 'Is it one of the garrison?'

"'It must be one of the political prisoners, *Señor Capitan,*' replied the soldier. 'They are all confined in the casemates yonder.'

"'Poor wretch!' said I, and, nodding to the soldier, strolled on toward the ramparts. Before I had gone far I was halted by another sentry. I peered at him through the murk.

"'Are you one of the new men?' I demanded.

"'No, *Señor Capitan,*' he answered, saluting.

"'The lazy rascals!' said I, tersely. 'I gave orders that they were to go on duty immediately as a reward for abusing my good nature and getting drunk. Are they in the *cuartel* with you?'

"'No, *Señor Capitan;* they are in the *cuartel* yonder at the angle of the wall.'

thal smote the heavy door several times with the ball of his hand.

"'Jacob!' he called, softly. 'Jacob, Jacob, my dear little Jacob!' He leaped back and raised his pick; it seemed as if the sounds of his sick brother's distress had robbed him of his senses.

"I seized the pick, and he whirled on me with a snarl. Indeed, Doctor, the Jew was like a tigress who hears the wail of a captured cub.

"'Idiot!' I whispered, 'do you want to rouse the garrison?'

"'Listen!' said he, and raised his hand suddenly. I listened, and in a lull of the surf there reached our ears a series of pathetic sounds. You know the sound, Doctor; the feeble strangling of a pulmonary patient when too weak to cough, something between a cough and a rattle—and then it suddenly ceased and there came to our ears, in a voice as thin as a wafer's edge: '*Isidore!*'

"And then Rosenthal went mad. He knew,

we both knew, that Jacob was dying; there was no mistaking that. It would be a matter of at least two hours' hard work to liberate him without noise, and we both felt that by that time he would be already liberated; and Rosenthal, the Jew, whose habit and training and every instinct was that of weighing cost and gain, decided that he could not afford to wait, garrison or no garrison. Apparently life held nothing which could compensate him for the privilege of holding his crippled brother in his powerful arms while the struggling soul was fighting its way to the God of his fathers. Before I could interfere—and, indeed, I did not try very hard to interfere, Doctor, for was I not paid to carry out the man's orders?—he had raised the pick and assailed the heavy door with a fury that filled the silent fortress with thundering reverberations.

"Lights began to flash out in the barracks; at a distance a sentry fired his piece for an alarm. I heard shouts and cries and orders, and through it all Rosenthal, the Jew, stood

and hewed away at the door, till all at once, even as I saw a squad of men running toward us, it fell away, and Rosenthal, throwing aside his pick, leaped into the casemate, and from the blackness within I heard a fierce sob as he gathered his dying brother to his breast.

"For me there was no time for sentiment. As the first group of soldiers drew near there arose from the landward side a strident blast. I recognized the whistle of the Dutch steamer, which was going out. In sight of the soldiers I sprang to the open door of the casemate, peered within, then rushed to meet them.

" 'Some prisoners have escaped!' I howled. 'See, the door of the casemate has been torn away! Did you not hear the noise, sluggards? Look!' I pointed toward the town, where, above the farther wall, we could see the mast-head light of the steamer. 'They have fled to the *Hollandez!*'

"The cry was taken up: 'They have fled to the *Hollandez!*' and the soldiers, with a glance at the dark entrance of the casemate,

turned and made off toward the main gate. On the way they met the *commandante,* who, hearing their cries, rushed to the jetty and bawled at the steamer to stop.

"The place was deserted again and I softly entered the dungeon. I could see nothing in the gloom, but from the shadow I heard a deep, choking voice say: '*Jacob! Jacob! Ach, mein lieber Jacob! Mein kleiner, lieber Jacob!*'

"'*Isidore—mein bruder—Isidore!*' came the thin answer, and then there was a gurgle, a strangling cough, a sigh as of a soul exhausted, a body spent with vain struggling, and yet a sigh filled with promise of an infinite peace. I heard a rustling, such a sound as comes from a tired child as its head falls back upon its mother's breast. There was the sound of a multitude of kisses, a choked sob—then silence, which endured for many minutes.

"'Come, my friend,' I said, softly. 'We must go, if you wish to take Jacob away.'

"I led the way and Rosenthal followed me

out into the night, bearing the body of his brother in his arms, his broad chest shaken with sobs. We scaled the wall, called softly and a moment later our Curaçao men pulled the boat alongside."

Leyden paused, relit his pipe, puffed a few times in silence.

"They overran that Dutch steamer like cockroaches," he continued, with a chuckle, "and for a while the government seriously considered withdrawing the privileges of their ports to the line. Ultimately it was decided to let them off with a reprimand, because, you see, the steamers were the only opportunity the port officials had of getting their weekly allowance of spirits for nothing.

"Rosenthal? We made the run back to Curaçao in thirty-six hours, because, you see, the trade always blows the same way. The day we arrived Rosenthal paid me fifteen hundred dollars, the price agreed for the rescue of his brother.

"'It is too much,' said I, 'especially as we did not liberate the other prisoners.'

"'It was the price agreed,' he said, 'but if you say so I will take off ten per cent. for cash.'

"'Even then it is too much. There were the jewels which you gave to Trocas——'

"Rosenthal chuckled. 'They were imitations,' said he. 'I got them in New York. Those I left with little Jacob were also imitations. I knew my little brother's weaknesses,' he added, and the tears gushed out of his eyes."

## TWO SAVAGES.

E must really turn over a new leaf, Doctor," said my shipmate, Dr. Leyden, the collector of natural rarities. "Our tales have been growing more and more gruesome each night, until mere murder has quite lost its pungency! To-night I will tell you a different sort of story—a love story, from the view-point of the primitive; a funny story as well—although it would be hard to say whether the humor belong to the Stone Age or some age still to come.

"I was telling you last night about the expedition into Borneo for the heads; this was immediately after. When we reached the sea I was in a very bad way—running a steady, low fever, with diurnal rises, when I would become quite delirious, and the region about my spleen was so tender that it pained

me to breathe. My companion and his charge departed immediately by a vessel which was sailing for Sarawak, but I waited for a few days and then sailed by a schooner for Sulu, as this was a shorter voyage, and I wanted medical attendance as soon as I could get it.

"This was before your war, Doctor, when nine out of ten Americans would have told you that if Sulu was not in South Africa it must be somewhere in the West Indies. You know Jolo, the pretty little toy city, with its mediæval walls, where the sleepy Spanish sentries drowsed on the ramparts and gaped down into the immured market-place, ogling the pretty Mestiza girls, when they should have been keeping watch to see that none of the Moro gentry went *jementado* and proceeded to reduce the Christian census. It is the freshest place in the archipelago and the coolest, although so near the equator, for the trades sweep right across the little island and blow the most of the time.

"You remember the Englishmen who were

doing so well with the pearls? A temporary manager of theirs proved to be an old acquaintance of mine—a harum-scarum sort of chap, undoubtedly well-born, unquestionably badly behaved, handsome, vicious, kind-hearted when the notion took him, at other times as rough as a Liverpool navvy. I always suspected his escutcheon of bearing the baton sinister.

"Stewart was his name. I had known him in the Marquesas, where he had been the agent of an Australian firm. He asked me to his house, and I was glad to accept, for I liked the scamp, in spite of his wickedness, and, besides, I was in no condition to be left to the tender mercies of native inn-keepers.

"Stewart used to swear like a trooper when one of my chills would shake the whole of the little basket-house and disturb his siesta; then up he would get, clad only in the lower half of his pajamas, and rough the servants about and work over me as if he loved me. *Ach!* how it seems like yesterday that I have seen

him, naked to the waist, leaning over me, with his hands full of hot-water bottles, and his mouth full of blasphemies when one of them burned his fingers, the great muscles rippling the fresh skin of his arms as he moved me in the bed and his fierce, handsome face, with its deep lines of hard living, puckered in doubt—one could see the two natures fighting it out within him.

"The officers of the little garrison gave him a wide berth; they were afraid of him. In fact, about everybody in the place was afraid of him, from the Governor-General down to his own native women, of whom he had an interesting collection. He was a sort of blond devil. I am sure that I do not know why he so befriended me, unless it was because it was pleasant to find some one who was *not* afraid of him.

"I had begun to get about a little, but was still an invalid, when there arrived in the port the auxiliary yacht of the Count Asquin. I was admiring the vessel from our little bal-

cony, when Stewart came up and suggested that we go out aboard her. At first I declined, as the people were not known to us, nor we to them.

"'What's the odds!' said he. 'Perfectly good form in a hole like this. They've come purposely to see the place and people. They're our guests, by Gad!'

"There was something in this, so I agreed and we put off. I am rather diffident, Doctor, but I knew that Stewart would carry the thing off with his usual blunt, reckless, high-bred ease; there was so much style to the fellow, and he looked so fresh and well-groomed and aristocratic, and altogether the gentleman, which in so very many ways he was not. There was a strong ranginess about him which suggested the university athlete; the curly, crisp, yellow hair, the close-cropped mustache and the fresh but weather-beaten skin, all marked him for a thoroughbred. If he had got drunk every night of the week and slept in all his clothes he could have got up in the

morning and given himself a shake and looked the same. The secret lay in good blood somewhere—the close set of his small, well-shaped ears and the poise of his small head on his broad shoulders. *Ach!* If his behavior had only been as fine as his appearance——

"As we pulled alongside we saw a lady and a gentleman under the after awning, but they did not rise. There was a burly Breton quartermaster at the gangway, and he saluted and called a natty steward to take our cards. A moment later the owner came to greet us, and we observed that he was a man past middle age, gray, sallow, delicate, but distinguished in face and carriage. He regarded us for a moment in polite inquiry; then, divining that the call was purely social, courteously invited us aboard.

" 'Hope we're not intruding,' said Stewart, as he stepped on the deck, 'but we exiles are so keen for news from the outer world; besides, it's no end of a treat to see new faces, and if you're going to stop any length of time

perhaps we may be of service. I'm Stewart; this is Dr. Leyden.'

"Our host bowed his acknowledgment. 'I am the Count Asquin,' he said. I had already observed that the schooner was under the French flag. Stewart was staring at the woman under the awning; the Count was scrutinizing Stewart. I murmured acknowledgments and took a mental photograph of the Count. 'A French nobleman,' I thought. 'An invalid who does best at sea; asthma possibly; a student, erudite, polished—a philosopher, and withal a man of heart.' Physically he seemed a wreck, but one saw at a glance that a high vitality had been consumed in his body and conserved in his brain. His eyes were very large, very lustrous, of the reddish-brown which told of sentiment, of mind—the eyes of a poet. There was kindness in the large nose and the full-lipped mouth was sensual, but neither weak nor selfish; pleasure-loving, but wishful to share with others. He wore a grizzled mustache

and imperial, which gave a bizarre mask of the martial to a face which clearly could not have countenanced the killing of a mouse. It was a pleasant face—the face of a man with more friends than admirers.

"Stewart was still staring at the woman under the awning with that bold, British stare which would be insulting were it not so primitive—the stare of a savage, inquiring only, and utterly lacking in the volume of suggestion which makes the stare of the Latin so insupportable.

"The Count, satisfied with his scrutiny, invited us aft, and as he glanced from Stewart to me I thought that I caught a flicker of amusement in his lustrous eyes. I also had obtained a glance at the lady. She was evidently young and more than evidently lovely; quite young enough for a daughter and far too lovely for the wife of this burned-out elderly invalid.

" 'Will you come aft, messieurs?' said the Count. 'Doctor, it is evident that you have

been ill; permit me to offer you a *chaise-longue* here in the breeze.' He led the way, and as we drew near the lady I saw that I had done her injustice. She was more than lovely; she was positively radiant with a beauty of the most alluring type in a land where every one is weary and relaxed; glowing with youth and health and high vitality, she was as fresh in that sodden clime as a clear wind from the north—and yet, there was something beside, something less clear, more earthy, a lavishness of charm and form and feature; her type suggested a creature bred for the slave mart. It was evident that she was an American; the women of no other race possess that peculiar blending of subtlety, ignorance and audacity. 'A Californian,' thought I; 'a survival of the fittest New England stock transplanted from a climate where only the very fit *do* survive to a country whose finest crop is babies.'

"I glanced at the Count, the lax, yellow tissues of whom suggested a squeezed orange,

and when he introduced us to her as his wife I almost laughed. *His wife!* The conceit of the term, Doctor; he in whose eyes one could see the after-glow of extinguished flames. And yet—her fate might be far worse. One saw with what care he fostered the orchids hanging from the awning ridge-rope; beautiful, interesting, a care, a treat for the eye, costly epiphytes requiring support. Ah, Doctor, youth cannot appreciate the higher motives which inspire age with its craving for beauty.

"The Countess murmured a few words, and I judged her neither well-born nor clever. You know, Doctor, there are in nature certain freaks of superabundant beauty just as there are freaks of deformity, and she was one of these. There was not much else; planted with powerful instincts to take the place of mind, as in the lower animals; fairly well educated in a machine-made, American way—'advanced,' very possibly, but as savage as if she roamed the Carpathian scarp clad only

in her abundant hair, which no doubt she would have very much enjoyed.

"She offered us her hand after the manner of 'the Slope,' and as Stewart took it in his I saw the blood surge up beneath his yellow, tropic tan; his pale eyes shone like those of a gull, and one could see the deep chest swell suddenly as he caught his breath. Consider the nature of the man, Doctor—more animal than a well-bred dog, who, after all, has many elevated traits, whereas Stewart's were mostly low—and the fact that he had not seen a fair woman for months.

"The deep blue eyes of the Countess were fixed upon Stewart with a sort of startled wonder; no doubt the contrasts of the man's crushing masculinity with the colorless shell of her husband's sex may have struck her as a positive shock. There was almost a physical weight in the impulse which he projected toward her. One saw that she took it with a little shudder—as an hereditary drunkard might gulp his first glass of spirits.

He stood holding her hand and saying what was necessary, and while he was saying it his light, wicked eyes were devouring her. The thing was so outrageous that I could not help glancing at the Count, and at the same moment his soft, dark eyes met mine, and, to my amazement, he actually smiled! He saw the thing as I saw it; no one could have seen it differently; in fact, there was a sort of mutual understanding in his smile, but nothing unkindly.

"The Countess was quick to recover her poise; not through breeding nor modesty, but from sheer combativeness. She seemed suddenly to realize—and I have no doubt that it struck her as quite a new idea—that a man could be too familiar with his eyes alone. There was plenty of fight in her, as one could see from the flash of her dark blue eyes and the rounded squareness of her jaw. She promptly assumed so great an air of chilly condescension that Stewart stared again and then began to grin. He was

a good talker, however, in his rough, staccato way, and soon I saw that she was beginning to forget about herself and think about him.

"'You have been ill, Doctor?' said the Count to me. 'Myself, I am also in feeble health—asthma, with a uric acid diathesis and a bad leak in the mitral valve. Hence the sea, the tropics, a sedentary life. By nature I am active, and I find it less difficult to remain quiet where there is abundant passive motion, as aboard a vessel.'

"I explained to him the nature of my own illness and my reason for coming to Sulu.

"'*I* came to rest in smooth waters,' he replied. 'It is a charming island.' We talked of other things and soon discovered many mutual friends. When at last we left, at my insistence, the Countess, at the suggestion of her husband, invited us to dine the following night.

"Stewart was silent on the way in—moody, taciturn, tugging at his crisp mustache. As we entered the house he burst out:

"'Did you ever see a more beautiful woman, Leyden? Jove, what hair! what a figure!'

"'I find the husband more interesting,' said I. 'Any white woman would be beautiful if one stood her up against the shadow of the equator.'

"He grunted like a peccary. 'Her husband? —her proprietor!—it's gross flattery to speak of that wreck as her husband. What right has a cadaver like that to a wife? A widow would be a jolly lot more becoming. What's he got to hold her with?'

"'A yacht, a title, a good mind and a wedding ring,' said I.

"'Might hold some women,' he growled; 'can't hold that one,' and he took himself off to bed.

"We went aboard the yacht the following night, and I do not think that I have ever spent a more disagreeable social evening. The Countess was glorious in the most daring of black décolleté gowns. Her great

blue eyes were gleaming like sapphires, and her hair put one in mind of the burnished copper one sees when the schooner heels to the trade-wind. Fancy, Doctor, one of those profuse Californians, abundant as a cluster of Tokay grapes, thrust close against a yellow-haired atavism of the Neolithic age like my poor acquaintance Stewart. *Ach!* he was drunk before he had finished his sherry; at every sip he tasted the subtle perfume of her, and the cup she held to him was filled with wine as old as the race and as deep as the blue of her sapphire eyes. She was receiving, I fancy, as well as giving. *Ach!* it was very primitive! Instead of the yacht and the sparkle of the yellow lamp-light on the plate and glass there should have been a forest and the pale moonlight filtering through the boughs of giant hemlocks. . . .

"I looked at the Count, and upon my word, Doctor, I saw that he was relishing the thing! —more than that, he was enjoying it! Perhaps it was the interest of the student; per-

haps he was absorbing the warmth of fires which no longer kindled on his own hearth. At any rate, he was eagerly receptive of this spectacle, repellant to me in its unfitness, and was drinking it with parted lips, a tinge of color in his hollow cheeks, a deep glow in his red-brown eyes. There was nothing malicious in his regard; rather, it was the acme of benevolence. He caught my eye and smiled as he had done the day before.

"The dinner, which was elaborate, completed, we adjourned to the quarter-deck, where the Count skilfully drew me into a discussion regarding racial and tribal peculiarities, and I soon found him *savant*. Soon, and to-day I know that it was by express design, I became oblivious to our *milieu* and harked back to the era when my science was in its infancy, for although myself but a mere collector of those rare things in which science properly interests herself, I hold the greatest respect for the founders of my craft, who were themselves both scientists and collectors.

We discussed the early labors of these masters, until soon I was soaring in heights of professional exaltation which made me quite oblivious to the other discussion being carried on in the shadow by these two savages, whose vigorous young bodies, with their attendant embryonic psychic impulses, were at a phase so many thousands of years ahead, or perhaps behind, our own epoch of mental autocracy. Here was this woman with the beauty, temperament, and principles, no doubt, of Helen of Troy, and mind enough to go after what she wanted; Stewart an avatar of Jove himself, the sire of all profligates, but with mind enough to smirch his classic duality; myself, all cerebrum, ultra mental and analytic, perhaps because my blood was just ridding itself of millions of sporulating *plasmodia;* the Count, who had at some time, I fancy, swung in the orbits of the lot of us. He certainly had the mind, and he *had* had the body before he gave it to his mind to squander, and it seemed to me, as I pulled up sud-

denly from some peroration and caught the expression of his eye as he turned his face to mine in the yellow lamp-light, that he was listening to the echoes of an early anthem—and found them sweet—even at the cost of his so-called *honor!*

"I was glad when the time came for us to leave, for I could see that between the wine and the woman Stewart was fast shedding his restraint. There was a cut to his voice, a fierce deviltry in the ring of his laughter, and I have seen men shot for less than the expression of his eyes. At first it appeared that the Countess had an eye for her husband; then, seeing nothing but indulgence in his aristocratic face, she had yielded gradually to the fascinations of the hour, until one could see that she had quite lost the focus of her conventional perspective. You see, Doctor, she was not a high-bred woman, so that she was quite untrammeled by the instincts which come of long generations of culture. The only thing which held her in check was the

fear of jeopardizing her official position as the wife of an invalid millionaire nobleman, but, seeing that he found only diversion in her coquetries, she gradually yielded to the potent attractions beside her, until I do not believe that she realized how ridiculously naked her emotions had become. It was evident that Stewart was holding her hand beneath the table, and he was sitting so close that their knees touched. It was very primordial!—and all of the while the Count was talking easily and with an expression which seemed to say: 'Dear, innocent children—what a pleasing spectacle is youth and ardor!'

"I was glad when the time came for us to leave, as I am a simple old bushman, Doctor, and I found the spectacle embarrassing.

"The following day Stewart had the Count and Countess to luncheon, and after a very well-ordered repast asked if they would enjoy a drive into the country.

" 'You would enjoy it,' said the Count to his

wife. 'Myself, I dread the dust and the heat. Go with Mr. Stewart, if you wish'—his smile was nothing short of angelic as he said this—'and I will remain and talk with Dr. Leyden, if he will permit me.'

"The dark blue eyes of the Countess swept upward, and as they met the cold gleam in Stewart's she turned her face from us, but I could see the crimson creeping to the tip of her ear, partly hid by the mass of her hair. Stewart nodded indifferently and ordered his pony and chaise.

"When they had gone the Count turned to me. His fine face was serene, but there was a wistfulness in his lustrous eyes.

" 'What a delightful thing it is to be young, Doctor!' he remarked. Then, in the same voice: 'You were telling me last night about the Dyaks . . .'

"It was almost dark when they returned. The Countess was very pale and seemed nervous and irritable, while Stewart was in a state of suppressed and concentrated fury.

I fancy that he had taken too much for granted and got himself well snubbed. At any rate, his manners were those of a sulky coal-trimmer, and I was much embarrassed.

"This sort of thing went on for over a week; we visited back and forth. Stewart's presence put rather a taboo on the yacht as far as the garrison was concerned. The Count and I became intimate. Stewart pursued the Countess with a sort of cold and reckless fury, and while she was certainly swayed by his dominant force, it was quite evident that he was not progressing. I guessed that his roughness, while it fascinated her, at the same time aroused her antagonism. After all, Doctor, I am not sure but that passion provides its anti-toxine in a temper. I have no doubt they fought like cats; at any rate the strain began to tell upon the Countess. One could see that she was growing haggard. Then one fine day they disappeared!

"I was breakfasting alone when Count

Asquin rushed into the room, weeping and wringing his hands, quite beside himself with grief and shock.

"'They have gone!' he cried. 'M. Stewart and my wife! They have fled in one of the pearling yawls!'

"'I am very sorry for you,' said I, 'but I cannot say that I am surprised.'

"He did not seem to hear me; he wrung his hands and the tears ran down his sallow cheeks.

"'I am desolated!' he wailed. 'Was there ever such ingratitude? But think of my indulgence!—my consideration!—the unselfishness of my behavior!'

"'My dear fellow,' said I, 'you are quite incomprehensible! As a man of the world, could you not see that Stewart was madly in love with the Countess——'

"'And she with him!' he cried. 'What could have been more evident? But why this flight? Did she not have everything heart could desire? Has her single wish been un-

fulfilled? Only yesterday I bought her a pearl of Stewart for twenty thousand francs. How could she so deceive me?' Upon my word, Doctor, he yelped like a coyote!

"'And have you lived all of this time,' I interrupted, quite out of patience with the old fool, 'and not discovered that yachts and pearls and kindness do not count for everything with a beautiful woman like the Countess when——'

"'But you do me injustice!' he protested. 'Of course, I saw that she desired M. Stewart for her lover'—he mopped his eyes—'it was most natural that she should! One does not retain his youth forever, Doctor—his voice was deprecating. 'Stewart is a charming fellow—handsome, dashing, *libertin.* Few women could resist him. But since she so much desired him, why in heaven's name did she not take him, instead of growing pale and *maigre* and finally bolting off on a stinking oyster boat! I ask you, my friend, was not

my attitude most obviously that of *mari complaisant?'*

"Doctor, I got up without a word and lit my big china pipe, and as I struck the head of the match against the wall I felt tempted to strike my own head after it. I felt like a fool. The whole thing became so obvious—should have been so obvious from the very start—and yet, here these two young savages had run away because it seemed the only thing to do, when they might just as well have remained and cheered the soul of the poor old Count, to say nothing of enjoying his hospitality! Here again was I myself blaming the Count for an infatuated old cuckold—and he, the only really logical and sensible person in the whole affair, wailing beside his empty cage!

"Then the humor of the thing struck me and I almost laughed outright. It was so ridiculous, and such a joke on the runaways, who were cooped up in a little fifty-foot pearling yawl or stowed away in a Nipa hut in

some little island, when they might have been so comfortable!

"'Did you ever explain your sentiments regarding this affair to the Countess?' I inquired.

"'Doctor!' he protested, 'one cannot be indelicate! Certainly not! Could she not have inferred it from my behavior?'

"'I am afraid,' said I, 'that her inferences were less flattering. Mine were—permit me to apologize.'

"He began to yelp again. 'She was so beautiful!—so interesting—such a typical American woman—a frank and ignorant young savage! It was a joy to be with her, Doctor; a joy to watch the primitive workings of her mind—and her little efforts at deception I found adorable. She was transparent as a naughty child——' He began to blubber.

"'She appears to have possessed certain rudiments of guile,' I replied. 'You have taken too much for granted. A Parisienne

would have understood; the ethical situation was too delicate for an American; she was too narrow-minded to combine adultery and domestic tranquillity.'

"'They are so crude, these Americans!' he wailed. 'So crude!'

"An extraordinary situation, Doctor, and yet reasonable when one pauses to consider. The Count was highly esthetic; his wife charmed him in really a very elevated way; he enjoyed her beauty, her society, her *bonhomie,* no doubt her care and strength, for she was kind-hearted where her passions were not concerned; he may have leaned upon her vigorous young vitality. She and the tomb could not be pictured in the same frame. He appreciated her; wanted her to be happy; was thoroughly good to her, and did not mean that because she was tied to a broken invalid she should be deprived of the fulness of life. An archaic and rather pathetic casuistry, was it not?

"I pondered. 'They are in a small sail-

boat,' thought I, and glanced at the map of the archipelago hanging from the wall. 'They will, of course, make for Zamboanga, but on the way they are apt to stop at Port Isabella.' You know the place, Doctor—in Basilan; a beautiful spot: the little village, the hot slope of open country rolling gradually upward to meet the cool forests on the heights; the late sun painting it all golden and shining back from the towering boles that form the ramparts of the primeval woods? They were most apt to be in Basilan.

" 'I think we can find them,' said I. 'There should be no great difficulty in coaxing back two naughty children with the sweets you have to offer.'

"He kissed me on both cheeks; then nothing would do but I must go with him; a cruise *de luxe* would set me on my feet, clinch the nail of my convalescence. He began to plan a touching reconciliation, the little dinner which would attend this *fête d'amour*, the wines, the touching speech which he would

make, all of which so overcame him that he wept upon my shoulder.

"Of course, I promised to go with him; one could scarcely do otherwise; and, indeed, Doctor, I had a real esteem for the poor fellow, who in many ways had the heart of a child. But the excitement of the whole affair proved too much for his organically diseased heart, and that night he nearly died.

"His steward came in to tell me that he feared his master was moribund, so I got a Spanish surgeon and we worked over him throughout the night. It was several days before he was out of immediate danger, and then there came a typhoon, and his captain wished to put to sea to ride it out. The yacht took the gale like a gull, but altogether it was two weeks before the Count was fit to proceed on the quest of his errant wife.

"We left Jolo early in the morning, and when I awoke the next day we were lying off Port Isabella. I took the gig and went ashore, leaving the Count taking digitalis and almost

in a syncope. I was firm in refusing to allow him to land, and, to tell the truth, I did not much expect to find the couple. Having found the local padre, a Mestizo, I asked after the fugitives.

"'Yes,' he said, 'they were here, but they have gone, blessed be the name of the Virgin! A pair of devils—with apologies to the Señor if he should be so unfortunate as to be a friend. Myself, I believe them to be quite mad. First they would quarrel, then they would kiss—then they would quarrel again. Never have I seen so many quarrels—nor so much kissing,' he added, thoughtfully.

"'When did they leave?' I asked.

"'But three days ago; St. Christopher grant that they do not return! He was a devil—a white devil, this man—they were both devils.' He shuddered. 'The kissings were growing less and the quarrels more. The night before they left she came flying to the convent and begged for an asylum. I was tempted, Señor, for she was very beautiful,

like the women of Paris, where I was educated, and a poor priest grows weary of nothing but native women—but I thought of this purple-eyed devil and refused her sanctuary. It was fortunate, for as we were discussing it he came up and ordered her to return to the house which they were occupying. I do not know by what powers she cursed him, but it must have been very terrible, for he seized her by the shoulder and thrashed her with a bamboo until she howled like a beaten bitch.

"'I have no doubt it did her a world of good,' I answered. In fact, Doctor, this was the most cheering intelligence which I had received. I began to believe that the Providence which had ordered these things was not unwise.

"'The Señor is correct,' replied the priest, gravely, 'for when I passed the house on the way to mass they were on the verandah, and she was crouching at his feet, with her head upon his knee. There is nothing like a bam-

boo shoot for a bad-tempered woman, no matter how beautiful,' he added, thoughtfully.

"I returned to the schooner and told the Count I thought that we would find them in Zamboanga; I told him also of the discipline which his wife was under. He looked pensive.

" 'Perhaps it will do her no harm,' said he. 'She is strong as a young donkey, and it may be well for her to lick the paint off her toy.'

"You see, Doctor, he did not love this woman in any sense, conjugal or paternal. He was grieved at her loss, as one might be at the loss of a pretty and interesting pet—a Persian cat—and he was determined to get her back, no matter how large the reward he was compelled to offer. When he got her he might confine, but not punish her. Stewart really was far the more practical of the two.

"Early the following morning we reached Zamboanga, and hardly had the anchor splashed when a boat from the shore shot alongside, and, to my utter amazement whom should I see in the stern but Stewart himself.

"The Count, who was below, sent word asking him to descend, which he did, with a curt salutation to me. He was a blackguard of direct methods, was Stewart, employing the weight of his vitality to project his purpose and driving it to the mark with sheer physical force; with him logic filled the place of imagination.

"He entered that cabin and confronted the outraged husband precisely as if their relative situations had been reversed—certainly a cool hand, utterly fearless and indifferent to possible redress.

"The Count regarded him mildly. I was amazed at his composure.

" 'I suppose you are looking for your wife,' said Stewart, bluntly.

" 'Monsieur is correct,' replied the Count, politely, but I saw a shadow cross his face. It was evident that his sensitive nature found the other's manner offensive.

" 'Then I'll fetch her back,' said Stewart. 'She won't come without.'

"'I am pained,' murmured the Count, gently, but I could see the pupils of his reddish-brown eyes dilate. One could not conceive of the man in a rage; yet he looked quietly dangerous. 'Is it that the Countess fears my anger—my reproaches?' His grizzled eyebrows were lifted in concern.

"Stewart gave a laugh of such coarse brutality that one longed to kick him.

"'No,' he said, contemptuously, 'hardly! I fancy she's taken a bit of a liking to me.' There was no braggadocio mixed with his brutality, Doctor; in fact, he colored as he said this and seemed embarrassed. I believe that he was telling the truth.

"'In that case,' replied the Count, thoughtfully, and his face resumed its former expression of indulgence, 'why do you not return with her?' He leaned back in his chair, brought the tips of his fingers together, rested his chin on the indices and looked cordially at Stewart, who was staring at him in angry bewilderment. 'You have been acting under

a misconception, Mr. Stewart. I find you agreeable; you have done much to relieve my *ennui;* besides this, you appear to be necessary to the contentment of Madame the Countess.' He was putting Stewart with the servants, you see, Doctor, or lower. 'Go fetch the Countess,' he continued, briskly, 'and we will forget this folly; we will take our dear friend Dr. Leyden to Singapore. If it is that you cannot afford to lose the time from your affairs, I will make you my secretary at a salary of your own choosing.'

"Stewart for the moment was stricken dumb, too utterly amazed to speak; then the blood came pouring into his florid face and his eyes narrowed to mere slits—and then I grieve to say that all of his blackguardism came ripping out. He cursed the Count, the Countess, the schooner, himself; in fact, he gave such an exhibition of savage and unbridled rage as I have never seen before but once. You see, Doctor, the man was sufficiently intelligent to appreciate that he was

several very undesirable things—a scoundrel, an ass, and an object, as it appeared to him, of such utter contempt to this French nobleman as to be quite beneath his resentment—and he felt that when a man's behavior crawled beneath the contempt of a Frenchman he was quite a way down! As Stewart read it, and I wonder to this day if he was right, he represented a toy to be purchased for the amusement of a pet—a sort of sub-plaything.

"As all of this struck Stewart in a sort of final, knockout insult he leaped up so suddenly as to capsize his chair and rushed from the cabin, a stream of curses standing out behind him like the tail of a comet.

"I glanced at the Count to see how he had stood the shock of the interview, and, would you believe it, Doctor, his face wore the flush of actual health and there was an entirely new glow in the depths of his lustrous eyes. His valet was standing at his elbow, and he leaned back and said a quick word, which I did not

catch. The man slipped into the pantry and I heard him skipping up the ladder to the deck.

"The Count looked at me. 'The *canaille!*' he said. 'I knew that he was theoretically a scoundrel, but I did not suspect that he was the low-bred pig which he has proved himself. He once told me that his father was a lord; if so, his mother must have been a fishwife! . . . Ah!'

"I sprang to my feet, for there came from above the sounds of a most terrific struggle, the impact of wicked blows, hoarse bellows of rage; then there was a crash, followed by silence, save for labored breathings.

" 'Sit down, Doctor, I beg of you!' exclaimed the Count, and there was a note of apology in his voice. 'It has seemed best to me to detain this fellow until we are able to obtain custody of the Countess. A deplorable state of affairs'—he spread both hands palm downward in front of him—'but what is one to do? Have I not offered this young man every

courtesy—every hospitality? Yet you have heard his insults. Evidently he came aboard because he was anxious to be rid of the Countess.' (It is my private belief, Doctor, that the scoundrel had some design of selling her back to her husband.) 'He has taxed my forbearance excessively——'

"'What shall you do with him?' I inquired.

"He shrugged his shoulders and made a wave of the hand. 'I do not know—that is immaterial; the important thing is to secure my wife. Is it too much to ask you to go in and look for her, my dear Doctor?'

"I went in, of course, but in the meantime she had learned that Stewart had gone off to the schooner, and, fearing violence for him at the hands of her husband, she had gone out herself. When I returned the situation was interesting. Madame was confined to her room in a state of frantic and screaming defiance; Stewart was double-ironed in the lazarette, and, although I did not see him again, I learned afterwards that he had not been over

gently handled by the sailors, and the Count was sipping absinthe in the saloon and listening to the ravings of his wife with an expression of amused indulgence.

"'But listen to her, Doctor,' he observed, gently stroking his gray imperial. 'Primitive woman howling for her mate; Eve, haled back from outer darkness, screaming to Adam, whose admittance is denied. My faith! she is more beautiful than ever—although,' and his brow clouded, 'bearing the marks of ill usage.' He arose and began to slowly pace the beam of the saloon; his scholarly face seamed in thought, the lustre gone from his eyes. It was evident that he was thinking deeply. From the other side of the after bulkhead came the short, angry sobs of the Countess. He listened for an instant, and at the sound of a sudden little snarl of rage he slowly shook his head and smiled.

"'Interesting, Doctor, is it not? It would be beautiful in a way, primevally beautiful—an idyll of the callow world when the rocks

were jagged like molten lead thrown into water, the vegetation chiefly fungoid, and it was necessary to clip the wings of one's horned cattle. But for the man—he is a late, mongrel, low-grade production, with merely a few primitive impulses.' He paused to ponder. Madame's sobs continued rhythmically, broken now and then by a little '*gr'r'r'*—pure rage—the sounds which babies make when too angry to scream.

"'Oh, these children—it is hard to know what course to take.' The Count turned to me in his perplexity. 'As far as this man is concerned, I suppose that the best thing would be to give him a good flogging and let him go—eh, Doctor?'

"'A flogging!' I echoed, with a sort of horror.

"'Why not? He is not a gentleman. He has endangered my life, which I forgive; he has seduced my wife, for which I make due allowance; he has insulted me to my face, for which I do not bear malice; but—he is *ca-*

*naille,* which makes it impossible for him to do all of these things which one might forgive in a gentleman. He uses the wrong sort of profanity; he chastises his mistress with his fists instead of his wit; he forgets his dignity before my servants; when disarmed he disgorged a *knife*—and he an Englishman! *Br'r'rgh!* he is a nauseous animal. Let him have a few lashes and be set ashore.'

"Perhaps I was wrong, Doctor, but I could not forget the rascal's care of me when I was ill. I told the Count flatly that I would not permit it, and when he proved obstinate told him outright that to flog Stewart he would first have to use violence towards me. He broke down and wept at the bare suggestion of this, commemorated my treatment and care of him when he was ill, and then embraced me and swore that he loved me like a brother, and in the same breath gave orders that Stewart be immediately set ashore, with no further ill-treatment.

"Stewart was accordingly landed and went

his way in peace. The Countess got over her fit of temper in about an hour, ate a hearty dinner, drank several glasses of champagne, cheered up, and when I retired she was sitting on the arm of her husband's chair and, assured of his unqualified forgiveness, was *relating her adventure,* while he chuckled to himself like a mischievous schoolboy.

"The savage was back on the reservation; glad to be there; fed, forgiven, petted and quite content to be good—until the next time."

## TWO GENTLEMEN

OOK at that cat, Doctor," said Leyden, "but do not let her see that you are looking. There!—did you see the beast crouch, and glance at us, and then begin to wash its face?"

I glanced at the ship's cat—an interesting beast, as are most ship's cats, either because one has more time to study their actions, or because a limited sphere develops the animal's ingenuity. Some one had brought aboard a *tulu-pial* bird and hung its cage over the hand steering-gear, where the pineapples are strung out to ripen. The cat had lost no time in locating the bird and was busy measuring distances when we interrupted.

"That cat," said Leyden, "would be typified by a sneak-thief among men. Do you know, Doctor, I believe that domestic animals,

like men, have their grades of honesty. Have you not seen a finely bred dog of high courage subdue an animal impulse which he feels to be degrading?"

I *had* observed this thing, but, seeing that the subject had suggested something to Leyden's mind, I merely nodded. Few men had looked as deeply into the nature of all things made as had this keen-sensed Teuton collector, who seemed equally at home in any part of the civilized or savage world. He had at times played the same quiet, modest part in the founding of empires as in the advancement of science; his friends were to be found from the palm tree to the palace, and I fear that a great many of his enemies were dead.

"I had once an occasion to watch a striking case of *noblesse oblige* in an animal," Leyden continued. "I would not tell the story if it were a simple animal yarn, as such tales are, as a rule, tiresome and untruthful. This story concerns people, principally, but as those upon whom it reflects discreditably are dead

—with certain others—there is no reason why it should not be told.

"This was a good many years ago, Doctor, when the steamer transportation in the Pacific was less efficient than to-day. I had engaged passage from 'Frisco to Samoa on a schooner which was owned and captained by the son of one of those early blackguards who used to land their crews upon an island full of harmless cannibals, show them the way of civilization, demonstrate the wickedness of their present lives, and then go off and leave them to infect each other with constitutional disease in the place of eating one another. I hope there is an interesting corner of hell reserved for all such! Our captain, whose name was Deshay, was the frequent handsome outcrop of a vicious sire; his father had eloped with his mother, who was the half-caste wife of a missionary in the Marquesas and one of the most beautiful women I ever saw. Later, Deshay, senior, had made a good bit of money in the island trade, sent his son

to England to be educated, and while the boy was there the parents had been lost in a typhoon.

"When I went down to the schooner on the morning of her sailing date I found aboard her a young man of very pleasing appearance, who introduced himself as Claud Dillingham and told me that we were to be shipmates.

"'You are related to Claud Dillingham, the owner of the Great Bear Mine?' I asked. This Dillingham was a Virginia gentleman, who had made a great fortune in mining claims, and was at that time the richest man on 'the Slope.'

"'I am his son,' said he; and as he was speaking, a magnificent bloodhound walked from behind the house, his fine, velvety head raised, the delicate nostrils twitching and the dreamy, half-closed eyes reinforcing the more potent sense of smell.

"'What a magnificent animal!' said I.

"'Yes,' he answered. 'I am taking him with me; he is so intelligent that he soon ac-

customs himself to new surroundings; besides, he would die if I left him behind.'

"I remarked that I had heard of dogs being devoted to their masters to that extent. There was no skepticism in my voice, but he was so sensitive that he flushed like a girl.

" 'I speak from experience,' said he, quickly. 'I once left him for a fortnight and then had to return, as they wrote me that he had not eaten since I left. When I got back he was as thin as a coyote. I always took him with me after that.'

"We talked together for a little while, and it did not take me long to discover that the master was as thoroughbred as the hound; in fact, he impressed one as a trifle *too* finely bred—*in*bred, possibly. He was too delicately charming—six feet in height, gracefully and slenderly built, very fair, with the pure complexion and blue eyes of a very pretty girl. I almost laughed when he presently confided in me that he was taking the voyage in the hope of overcoming the liquor

habit. I suspected that there was a girl in the case—that Claud was in love and had conceived that he was in danger of becoming addicted to the vice because he sometimes drank a glass of beer when in college.

"As we were chatting together the hound walked suddenly to me and raised his handsome head as if inviting a caress.

" 'That is unusual,' said Claud. 'His reception of people is often embarrassing. He will not go near Captain Deshay. He is too polite to growl; he simply gets out of the way, but he can't keep his hair from bristling a little.'

"I asked Claud presently if he had met the mate, and he said that he had not, that he had not even seen him, which I thought rather singular. Claud told me that we had another fellow-passenger, a Professor Lentz, a scientist, not a mere collector like myself. He added that Professor Lentz was below, engaged in storing a wagon-load of instruments for recording everything from a falling star

to his last bottle of beer. A little while later I met him, and he proved to be a genial, if somewhat secretive, old crank, who apparently had some complex theory regarding ocean currents which he was afraid that some of us might try to steal.

"Captain Deshay came aboard at noon, and with him came a squat, heavily bearded individual, who proved to be the mate. Deshay himself was a well-educated man, of very finished manners and strikingly handsome in a rather animal way. The casual observer would have described his face as strong, but it was not—it was well-featured; but he had a lumpish jaw, which is different from a masterful jaw, and his eyes were petulant rather than determined. His manner was inclined to be loud, authoritative and with a coarse *bonhomie* always repellant to me. The most assertive thing about him was a big voice, and a big voice is scarcely ever associated with cold-blooded courage; it belongs to the blustering, bullying kind.

"It was at once evident to me that Deshay was very nervous about something; we were anchored half a mile out, and I noticed that he frequently scanned the water-front while getting under way. His crew appeared to be the scrapings of the wharves, a sulky-looking lot of ragamuffins, but Deshay seemed to have them well in hand.

"As the weather had been cold and raw, we three passengers went below, and as soon as we got under way Deshay left the deck to his mate and joined us. He called at once for spirits and the steward brought whiskey. I noticed an expression of surprised resentment in Claud's face at this proceeding; it appears that Deshay had given him to understand that he did not drink himself and that he did not expect any other passengers, and therefore he might never be subjected to temptation. I was not aware of this at the time; nevertheless, I knew that there was a struggle going on. You are aware, Doctor, of the faculty possessed by certain people of

placing themselves in a condition receptive to the more potent impulses of another; it is an inherent faculty, but can by training be developed to an amazing extent—a faculty with which women are more generously endowed than men, but in most cases a woman possessing this will depend upon it to the exclusion of logic; more than that, she abuses it, overworks it, lazily attempts to make it do the work of her mind to a point where it is no longer accurate, hence a negative benefit. A diplomat must possess it; the best diplomats develop it, just as a great musician of rich natural talent must develop this by years of arduous practice; perhaps an explorer or collector like myself may possess it even most of all, because he must be a trained observer, which enables him to buttress the psychic and the mental with a precise faculty for grasping subtle physical signs.

"Therefore, Doctor, in the brief moment in which the whiskey was brought I knew that Claud felt himself to be tricked, and I was

curious to see what he would do about it, because, in spite of his effeminacy, my instinct told me that he was not weak. The whiskey was set upon the table. Lentz helped himself; I did likewise, and as I did so I heard Claud's feet scuffle a trifle on the rug, and knew that his impulse was to arise and leave the table. I knew that he was staring indignantly at Deshay; there was a reflection of this look in the lurking gleam of contempt in Deshay's dark eyes and the sardonic lines at the corners of his mouth, and when he spoke, in the pleasantest voice which one can conceive, the words and the expression which accompanied them was the drop in excess needed to crystallize the solution of my dislike and distrust of Deshay.

"'Oh, come, Dillingham,' said he, lightly, 'we all know that you're on a swear-off, but just a glass for *bon voyage* will do you no harm. Once we're under way you can settle down to a life of undiluted virtue—say *when.*'

"He reached across the table, decanter in

hand, and began to pour the liquor slowly into Claud's glass, while I with difficulty repressed an inclination to knock the vessel out of his hand—not that I laid much importance on Claud's breaking his resolution, but because he was in danger of breaking it not through his *own will,* and I knew that if he sagged at this moment he would have an up-hill fight to get back his own while aboard that schooner, and the agonizing part of it all to me was that Deshay was *not* a strong character; he was a pine post painted to look like granite, and Claud had not enough knowledge of men to recognize the paint.

" 'No, thank you, Captain,' said Claud, in a voice of such weak determination that it positively brought the blood to my face. 'I'm off for good,' he said, and threw the inflection on the wrong words, as a man will when trying to show a determination which is lacking in him.

" 'Of course you are,' said Deshay, in a big, good-humored voice which seemed to jar the

glasses, 'but the swear-off starts with the voyage, and a voyage out of 'Frisco is not begun until you get through the Golden Gate. Come, now, matey, just one to bring us fair winds.' One cannot describe the large persuasion of his tone.

"'Really, I'd rather not,' replied Claud, with a school-boy squirm. It was a beastly spectacle, Doctor—an immoral spectacle; had Deshay been overcoming the scruples of a woman it would have been less offensive, because such an act is prompted by animal impulse, whereas this was purely Satanic—the violation of an unproved entity. I was strongly tempted to interfere, but many years of contact with all sorts of people have so confirmed me in the habit of minding my own business that very often I do not interfere when perhaps I should.

"'Oh, nonsense,' said Deshay, and there was in his full voice the slightest hint of the imperative, and his eyes, as they fixed themselves on Claud, were insolently authorita-

tive. If he had looked at me in that way I should have planted my fist in his face; with Claud I think that it was less lack of will than the obedience of a hyper-sensitive mind to a dominant suggestion. At any rate, Deshay poured out some Scotch and added some water, and Claud raised the glass, drained it, then sprang suddenly to his feet and left the saloon, nor did I see him again until dinner-time, and, Doctor, I knew that from that moment this brute Deshay, whom I correctly estimated as a creature of animal cunning, utter lack of principle and an amazing effrontery substituting strength, had one of his coarse, clumsy paws on the gold bags of Claud Dillingham, senior, and, barring accident, would squeeze out many a yellow coin before he allowed the son to escape from his clutches. Do not misunderstand me, Doctor; this freebooter was simply after gold.

"The following morning I happened to be talking with Deshay, for at sea dislike of a shipmate is no reason for not getting what

entertainment there is in him, and while we were talking Claud came up and requested a few words with him.

"'Anything personal?' I asked. Claud hesitated for a moment, apparently embarrassed.

"'Oh, no,' said he, and went on, stammering like a school-boy who had forgotten his recitation. 'You see, Doctor Leyden,' said he, 'when I engaged my passage I was afraid that I might be seasick, so I made an arrangement with Captain Deshay by which he was to drop me at Honolulu if I wished it. He—he—told me that there were to be no other passengers.'"

"'But you are not seasick, are you?' said I.

"'No,' he answered, 'but I am—I am—I am *home*sick.' Upon my word, he gulped like a little girl the first day in school and his blue eyes filled with tears; he could not have been under twenty years of age.

"'I do not think that you have dealt quite fairly with me, Captain,' said he, in a voice

which he tried to make cold and assertive, but would have been only contemptible if one had not been sorry for him—and then as he looked at our faces and saw scant sympathy in either, he crumbled.

" 'To tell the truth, Captain,' he continued, with a rather nervous laugh, 'I'm afraid that I've lost my nerve; I'm sick of the voyage already and want to get back home. Of course, I'll defray any additional expense due to taking you out of your course,' he concluded, with a sort of shy eagerness.

" 'Oh, come, old fellow,' said Deshay, coaxingly, and clapped him on the shoulder. 'The first twenty-four hours——'

" 'Look out for your dog!' I cried suddenly, for as Deshay's hand fell upon Claud's shoulder I had happened to glance at Dixie. The dog was standing quietly enough at his master's heel, and at Deshay's action had made none of the usual canine expressions of displeasure, and it was this absence which made him so alarming, for as I glanced at his great,

dark, intelligent eye it seemed filled with such a smouldering, slumbering intensity of hate that it gave me a positive start. The fine, silky hair was not even ruffled, there was not the slightest twitch to the velvet lips, but I could see that every muscle of the beautifully moulded body was tense as our weather shrouds and there was a fine quiver to the strong flanks. Have you ever, Doctor, closely watched a woman who is married to a man she hates, loathes, despises, as her husband enters the room? Perhaps he is a plausible brute who only shows the cloven hoof after he has shot the bolt of her bedroom door; no one else may guess it unless one watches the wife. The dilatation of the pupil, the faintest quiver of the nostrils, the little shiver—Dixie had all of these, but, as Claud had said, he was too self-contained, too much of a gentleman, to further reveal his emotions.

"I could see Claud shrivel at Deshay's familiarity. One guessed that he longed to

throw off the man's hand, which still clutched his shoulder good-humoredly, but he was too sensitive, too fearful of giving offense, not through any liking for the man, but because it seemed *gauche,* boorish, and would fill the air with a sort of rough impulse, shocking to his fine sensitiveness. No doubt he had suffered at times from rebuffs to his own timid advances, and had not enough knowledge of the world and men to keep from putting a coarse, thick-skinned brute like Deshay in his own class of emotions.

"His class—*ach!* the nervous sensibilities of those two were about as similar as those of a Kentucky thoroughbred and a Galapagos turtle! There are some men who can never get it through their heads that the only way to hurt another man's feelings is with a club.

"When I spoke, Claud glanced down at Dixie, and he saw the danger in the animal's eyes, to which Deshay was quite blind.

"'Dixie!' said Claud, reprovingly; that

was all, but Dixie understood and his beautiful head dropped contritely.

"'Oh, Dixie's all right,' said Deshay, carelessly, and, will you believe it, he swung down and took the dog's two forepaws, raised him up on his hind legs, while he pulled his ears playfully, and, taking the sensitive muzzle in his coarse hand, shook it back and forth! *Ach!* I have never been so overcome with admiration for the self-control of any living creature as I was for its amazing exhibition by that bloodhound! One saw him shudder, half close his eyes, as if in a disgust too deep for any expression. I really believe, Doctor, that the dog and master were at the psychological instant of Deshay's caress possessed of precisely the same emotions. Do you know, I believe that the hound accepted the human animal's familiarity less through discipline than a high-minded sense of courtesy which forbade his rejecting overtures which had the semblance of good will, for at first Deshay actually liked Dixie, and was unable to see

that the dog had loathed him from the start.

"Deshay turned to Claud. 'There's a good chap,' he said; 'you don't mind sticking it out to Samoa, do you, now?'

" 'I'm sorry,' began Claud.

" 'Oh, come,' said Deshay, and again there was in his voice that imperative note which had struck me so unpleasantly the day before. 'You can't tell yet whether you're going to like the cruise or not; you will begin to enjoy it in a couple of days—you know you will.' He fastened his lustrous eyes fixedly on the seraphic blue ones of the boy. 'You know you will like it—don't you, now?' There was in his voice a peremptory assertion.

" 'Perhaps you are right,' said Claud, and looked over the rail.

" 'Of course I am right,' said Deshay, loudly, and clapped him on the shoulder again. 'Now, let's have a drink to show there's no hard feeling. Steward!' he bellowed down the companionway.

"'But, look here, Captain,' said Claud, feebly, 'you seem to forget that I've given up drinking.'

"'Not a bit of it,' said Deshay, 'but there's a big difference between a man's giving up drinking and a man's never taking a drink. If you only drink at my suggestion you'll never come to any harm. Will you join us, Leyden?'

"'No, thanks,' I answered.

"'Oh, yes, you will,' said Deshay, in his large way.

"I shrugged my shoulders and, turning on my heel, walked aft. To tell the truth, Doctor, although I am a mild-mannered man who will make a very great detour to avoid a quarrel, I think that just at that moment——"

Eight bells were struck forward, and Leyden paused to hold the stump of his cigar to the dial of the taffrail-log.

"A little more than ten," he muttered; "that schooner did better for days on end!" He drummed softly with his fingers until I

grew irritated at his abstraction, which emotion he perceived, for he flicked the stump of his cigar into the wake and resumed.

"Doctor, have you ever witnessed the spectacle of a strong will and high courage becoming completely and utterly dominated, less through lack of strength than excess of imagination, by a creature of far inferior qualities, but overwhelming impudence? These are the conditions which often give the bully his amazing autocracy; his victims are auto-hypnotized by the sheer impudence of his assertions, until some day the bubble is pricked by an individual more practical and less imaginative and the reign of terror is at an end. In a week's time Deshay had Claud, and Dixie, too, for that matter, as entirely cowed and subjugated as if he had broken their spirits with a cat-o'-nine-tails, and the harrowing part of it was that, in spite of their high degree of sensitiveness, neither the dog nor the master were weak. I had studied Claud and felt his underlying force; he was

of that high-bred, nervous type, vacillating in little things, but, deeper, of the resistance of chilled steel; like the bulkheads in the ward-room of a battle-ship, white and gold on the surface, but able to stand the pressure of hundreds of tons. If the petty aggressions of Deshay had all been combined into a solid weight, requiring a forceful resistance, he could no more have held Claud than he could have held a handful of guncotton detonated in his clenched fist; that is, he could not have done so at first, and his animal cunning told him this, so that he began by accustoming his victim to yield in minor matters until he had given him the *yielding habit;* but as I watched the whole thing I was convinced that Deshay was too crude a production and too lacking in finesse to continue his course successfully, and I awaited the denouement with interest. Deshay had already shown his lack of cleverness by not taking the trouble to conceal the aversion that he had come to feel for Dixie, and the silent hate of the dog for him was a

thing as extraordinary to contemplate as the animal's marvellous dignity and self-control. Deshay had come to openly maltreat him, but not as yet in Claud's presence; he maltreated him once in mine, and *only* once, for I said a few words to him, at which he stared into my eyes and first blustered and then laughed and then went out with a sizzle—and we understood one another perfectly. On this occasion he had kicked the dog across the deck because the poor brute had placed both paws on the polished teak rail in a longing effort to discover land, and the dog had neither yelped nor growled nor become abject; he had simply walked away, albeit with a slight limp, but without the drooping tail and other signs of canine dejection. Perhaps you have seen a gentleman, Doctor, a fearless man, avoid a quarrel thrust upon him by a low fellow, and avoid it quietly and without loss of dignity. This was Dixie's behavior.

"We were not a pleasant party on that schooner. I had come to detest Deshay, and

he knew it; Lentz would no longer speak to him; the old fellow simply grunted when Deshay addressed him, as if he considered the captain a swine and able to understand the language. Claud did not hate him; he simply *loathed* him, and yet was dominated by him, and the same was true of Dixie. The air was heavily pregnant with possibilities, and, Doctor, when the denouement finally arrived it was as funny as the grin on the face of a corpse. Who do you suppose it was that pulled out the boat-plug? Why, none other than that black-browed humorist of a mate, who was, it seems, a murderer escaped from the Santa Clara county jail, and who had paid Deshay a good price for his billet.

"We were down in the neighborhood of Christmas Island, when we cut in close to some other little island; to this day I don't know what it was. Our course would trim it close, so at Deshay's suggestion we hove to and he and Lentz and Claud, Dixie and myself went in with two sailors to pull the boat. Pos-

sibly it was his plan to get Lentz and me ashore and leave us there, but he never had the chance, for no sooner had we struck the beach than Mister Mate up with his headsails, up stick and away!

"I must have a bizarre sense of humor, for I will confess that I dropped in a heap on the sand and laughed until the tears came. It was such a tremendous joke on the lot of us—especially upon Deshay.

"Deshay was like a crazy man; he tore up and down the beach and shook his fists and raved until his face was blue. He was an edifying sight, and we white people sat in a little row in our proscenium box and admired the exhibition. You see, he was three-quarters white, and that gave him imagination; but the other quarter, which should have been self-control, was Kanaka, and that knocked up the pawls and let his line run off the reel, so to speak.

"We were really badly off, Doctor; the island was very small and offered no food

that we could see. There was a small cluster of dwarfed palms, and they bore a few immature nuts; aside from these trees there was no shelter. We had not even a boat-sail. Fortunately there was water on this island—brackish, but potable.

"Deshay pulled himself together after a while, but he was savage and morose. I managed to get out of him the pleasing news that the next island was over one hundred miles distant, and probably no better than the one which we were on. Fancy our condition, Doctor!—our utter lack of everything but bad feeling. All of us, including the two sailors who had pulled the boat, hated Deshay; Deshay returned the sentiment; the two sailors, with their mates, had from the first been insolent to Claud, of whom they said rough things owing to his subjugation by Deshay; and on this, as well as from personal causes, both Lentz and I had more than once fallen foul of them. Within the last fortnight the tedium of the voyage had begun to tell

upon Lentz, and the old fellow had grown peevish and sulky; both of us had incurred Deshay's dislike by having very little to say to him. Conceive, then, the delights of the first few days of hardship with such a company.

"It was, I believe, the morning of the third day that I was awakened by hearing Deshay cry out: 'Where's that cursed dog?' I rolled over and saw that he held in his hand one of the heavy oak stretchers of the boat and was looking savagely about him. Near by sat Claud, his face in his hands.

"Deshay snarled out: 'Where's that dog, you droolin' baby?'

"Claud mumbled something, without looking up, and then I heard him say: 'We haven't come to that—*yet*,' and he said it with a groan, and I could see his face working painfully.

"Deshay walked toward him, talking as he went. He said: 'You'll see if we haven't when I find the cur, you chicken-livered little

milksop!' and at that moment there came from up the beach a musical bay which tolled out like a church-bell and died lingeringly away, to be drowned in the crash of the breakers; again this mournful note welled forth, rising like the voice of a bell-buoy above the roar of the surf, and this time it ended in a series of short, excited barks—such a bark as a hound gives when he has 'treed.'

"Claud sprang to his feet. 'He's found something!' he cried, and began to run down the beach. Deshay and I followed, and soon we came upon Dixie, who was very carefully uncovering a nest of new-laid turtle's eggs.

"Deshay was for eating his fill then and there, but this I would not permit, so we gathered them up and carried them back to the others, where we proceeded to divide them.

" 'Give Dixie his share,' said I to Deshay, who had undertaken the division.

" 'Give Dixie nothin',' he snarled back at me. And then he added: 'Why, you Dutch

fat-head, d'ye think I'm goin' to give good food to a dog?'

"He had carelessly dropped the boat-stretcher beside him, and before he could lay down the eggs it was in my hand. There is an etiquette, Doctor, to be observed even upon a desert island, and if Lentz had not grasped the other end of the stick I fancy that Dixie could have had Deshay's share.

" 'Ve must not qvarrel,' said Lentz; 've haf troobles enough alretty. Der hound found der eggs; gif him von or two.'

"Deshay growled, but I had frightened him, and he did as he was told, giving Dixie two of the eggs. The dog ate one of them, the other he carried to Claud; I saw Claud give it to Deshay.

"For ten days this thing went on. Every day or two Dixie would find a nest of eggs, but at the end of that time he could find no more, and after two days of hunger Deshay, backed by one of the sailors, demanded that he be killed. We were all fairly

weak by this time, Deshay being perhaps the strongest, because Claud had shared his own and the hound's food with him in the hope of prolonging the dog's life. In spite of this the lad held up wonderfully, sustained by his marvellous nervous vitality.

" 'It seems to me that Dixie has earned his right to live,' said Claud, the tears streaming from his eyes. 'He has already fed us for ten days; but if you all demand that he—be killed—I will not oppose it!' He buried his face in his hands.

" 'Guess you won't!' growled Deshay. 'We *do* demand it——'

" 'Speak for yourself, you mongrel swine!' said I, and added that I would starve before I would kill the hound or eat him, either. You see, Doctor, to my way of thinking Dixie had purchased the human right to die decently, like the brave, unselfish gentleman he was. Besides, he had the cleanest soul of any, save, perhaps, his master. What right had we to

prolong our lives at the cost of his? Lentz felt this.

"'I von't eat him,' he said; 'he is vort more as me.'

"'Ah, what's the use o' killin' 'im?' said one of the sailors, a hard specimen whom Deshay had picked up on the 'Barbary Coast.' 'Dawg 'r no dawg, we're all goin' up the flue. The quicker the sooner, say I.'

"The other sailor agreed with Deshay, who pulled out his knife and sidled toward the hound. If my strength had been equal to it I would have opposed him, but a touch of fever on top of other hardships had left me as weak as a kitten. However, it was unnecessary.

"And then, Doctor, there began a strange and savage spectacle. Dixie was by this time a hide-wrapped skeleton, yet his strength seemed in no way impaired. He was asleep by his master's side, but at the stealthy approach of Deshay he seemed to slide away—as one drags a rug across a floor. Deshay

continued to approach—at an angle—craftily, and still the hound slid away in that peculiar manner, his lustrous brown eyes fastened on the man in an agony of doubt and dread, which seemed to partly paralyze his movements. Deshay began to wheedle, to whine, to talk 'baby-talk' of the 'nice-doggy' type, and he actually hid the knife as he might if about to murder a man instead of a dog! Such a spectacle, my friend! this gaunt, savage, bloodshot, hairy, human animal, far more of a beast in all effect than the sad-eyed dog who had for days prolonged his worthless life—this bloodthirsty, *literally* bloodthirsty human hyena, crazed at feeling his wretched life slipping through his weakening grip, slinking along that beach in the bright, dewy morning, talking baby talk to the hound—making a disgusting exhibition of his craven soul, when he might have been waiting for death with the dignity of a gentleman!

"Still he slunk—and the dog slunk before him, his hair bristling less in fear than dis-

gust, certainly not in anger, for of this emotion there was no trace in the quiver of a lip, the echo of a growl, nor in the gleam of the beautiful, lustrous eyes. Rather it was a sense of deepest shame—a shame for his master's race!

"And then the brute in the man tore through the thin envelope; he screamed like a cat and threw himself at the dog, only to sprawl his length on the sand. He sprang to his feet and ran braying at the animal, who fled down the beach as silently and with the even interval of the man's own sinister shadow, until Deshay, his strength utterly gone, fell face downward on the sand, screaming obscenities. *Ach!* never have I seen a thing more disgusting.

" 'Dixie will take care of himself,' said I to Claud. 'He will not be caught napping.'

"From that time, Doctor, there began a series of psychological phenomena of which I was more appreciative afterwards. Up to the moment of this shocking outburst of De-

shay, Claud had been in all ways subservient, but as he looked upon the contour of this man's naked soul and saw its hideously dwarfed deformity I observed a peculiar expression on his face. I think that he was feeling Deshay's shame as if it had been his own —not through any charity, but through sympathy, which is such an entirely different thing. You see, Doctor, Claud was one of those hyper-sensitized natures which reflects an emotion as a still lake reflects its bank: you know the type—that which will listen to a poorly given address with a sense of deepest personal responsibility toward the speaker, or will see some person in a conspicuous place make a fool of himself and fairly writhe with shame—as Dixie had done. And do you know, I think that for the time the sentiments of master and dog toward Deshay were identical; the natures of the two were very similar; and I can say no better thing of Claud than this. They were two gentlemen, Doctor, gentlemen by birth and breed and associations,

and they possessed the natural instincts which result from generations of these things.

"Left to himself at just that moment, Claud would, I believe, have attempted to condone Deshay's behavior and to go to the rescue of his strangled decency, but it seemed to me that the psychological moment had arrived for placing matters in their due proportion. You see, Doctor, I had about concluded that we were all going to die, and I disliked the idea of letting Claud die without the opportunity of redeeming such manhood as he might possess, and with this in mind I reached out and dragged the veil rather roughly from his eyes.

" 'And to think,' said I, 'that yonder object should be your master—you, a gentleman and a white man!'

"Claud leaped as if I had lashed him across the face.

" 'What!' he cried. 'What—what—what's that you say?'

" 'It seems to me to be plain enough,' said I. 'Haven't you kow-towed and groveled and

beat your forehead before that thing, and broken your promise to stop drinking—to whomever you made that promise—for fear of that Kanaka thug out there?'

"Claud stared at me—stared like a baby—with his mouth and his big blue eyes wide open, and while he stared what little blood was left in his wasted body found its way up into his face; at last, it seemed to me, he was ashamed on *his own account.* While he was staring at me Deshay came up.

" 'Call your cur,' he growled. I was vexed that he interfered just when he did, as Claud in his weakened state had not yet assimilated the pre-digested idea which I had fed him. I was scarcely normal at the time, Doctor; to my mind, the whole thing mattered very little; it was like one of those nightmares in which one is sub-consciously aware that it is really only a dream and acts with delightful disregard of consequences. I thought of dying as one thinks of waking up, and before waking up I wanted to see Claud kill Deshay. I

knew that he could kill him if he wanted to, for all of us had passed the physical limits and were living upon our mentalities, and Claud's being so much more virile than Deshay's, he was just that much more alive; yet Deshay was too stupid to discover this, although I think that he must have felt it in a way.

"'Call your cur!' he repeated, but this time there was a change in his tone. It reminded me of the voice in which Claud had attempted to assert *him*self upon that first day aboard the schooner, but in Deshay's case this irresolution was on *his own* account; subjective, you see—not objective, like Claud's.

"I noticed this and began to laugh, and Deshay looked at me sheepishly. It was not a pleasant laugh; one feels sorry, Doctor, for a man who sacrifices his self-respect for the sake of some one else, but one laughs as I did at the man who does so for himself. This was the proportion between Claud and Deshay, and, although I found it amusing, I was never-

theless grievously disappointed when I saw that Deshay was subtle enough to feel his side of the see-saw go down—for, as I have said, I wanted to see Claud kill him before *any* of us died.

"As it was, Claud simply ignored his demands—and that was a little step toward preponderance. You see, Doctor, the two were dying men; we were all dying men. Deshay's investment was ultra-physical, and consequently low; Claud's was psychical, and although he might not last any longer, or as long, for that matter, he was *all there* as long as he *did* last; he was either alive or dead, not half-alive, like Deshay—and as the springs of our lives ran low Deshay's grew muddy, while Claud's was still clear and cold.

"The following morning Dixie again discovered a nest of eggs. I do not wish to tax your credulity, Doctor, and yet I will ask you to believe that so nearly approached the types of these two gentlemen that the sensibilities predominant in Claud obtained in Dixie to

an extent where he, too, felt the fall of Deshay, and when he had found the eggs and we starving wretches shambled up to the cache, Dixie, the fine, thoroughbred, peace-loving aristocrat, stood over his find with bared fangs and flashing eyes and allowed all to approach but Deshay.

"Yet gentlemen do not press these things, these matters of authority, as do your ruffians who have cut a high card in the shuffle of Fate—they accept them as a matter of course—and so neither Claud nor Dixie emphasized this occult change of balance, and as the days passed Deshay, crass fool that he was, lost sight of the fact that he had been relegated with any other dejecta. He would thrust in with surliness rather than ugliness, according to the nature of the low-grade, overthrown bully; but Claud and Dixie ignored him, his two sailors grinned at him, old Lentz blinked at him, and I, the mean average of the lot, laughed at him and explained carefully to him in how very many different sorts

of ways he was a fool, neglecting to help him out. This was quite safe, for, although my own mentality is of a fairly low grade, it was still in excess of Deshay's, and this fact gave me the whip hand. I did not tell him too much, as I still cherished hopes of seeing him killed.

"There came another season of starvation in this epoch of famine and none of us had anything to eat, and it was at this time that Deshay began a systematic stalking of Dixie, who was still a peace-lover and preferred, when nothing of greater value than his own life was at stake, to get out of the way. The dog slept always at his master's side, and, although the nights were cool to men starved and shelterless, Claud would never draw near the fire, because he wished to avoid the propinquity of Deshay. More than once I had awakened from my light, fitful, fever sleep to see this sneaking wretch creeping stealthily on hands and knees toward the sleeping animal, but with invariable result—Dixie would slip silently away and Deshay would return

to the fire, cursing savagely. Often through the day one would see him slyly maneuvering to get within reach of his prey; and as our starvation proceeded, this desire fastened upon his famished brain with the force of an insistent idea, until I really believe that he was impelled less by his hunger than through a sort of dementia. At times he would awake with a sharp cry, spring to his feet and rush at Dixie, who would lope away before him, when Deshay would fall into a paroxysm of rage. At these times Claud would turn away with a shiver of disgust, Lentz would blink rapidly, the two sailors would lie upon their empty bellies and snigger, while I would laugh.

"Yet all of this time Deshay had been encroaching little by little upon Claud's liberty, for, you see, Doctor, he was one of those unimaginative animals who require a clubbing at certain intervals as a sort of tonic treatment. Claud had utterly ignored him; he had rubbed against the rest of us in little ways

and found himself of baser metal, but Claud, like Dixie, had only avoided him, and this avoidance he continued to misinterpret until his confidence returned.

"It was after one of his frantic attempts to catch Dixie that he sought to force the issue. He turned suddenly and strode to where Claud was lying on the sand, and at the sight of his face the lad struggled to his feet—while I sat and waited, for something seemed to tell me that the time had come, and I felt no fear of the result.

" 'Call your dog, you putty-face!' snarled Deshay. 'Call your dog!'—he thrust out his matted jaw; 'call him up where I can get my hands on him!' said he. He had put away his knife and gripped the stretcher. 'Call him up, d'ye hear, or I'll spatter your fool brains all over the shop!'

"It was here that he struck the steel beneath the fresco. Claud looked him over, carefully, coolly, and, although their faces were almost in contact, from such an infinite distance—

and then he spoke, in a voice which matched his look, and at the chill of it Deshay drew back.

"Claud half turned and pointed to the cluster of palms. 'Go over there,' said he, very quietly, 'and see if you cannot die a little more decently than you have lived.' Words fail to express the icy dignity of his tone. 'It is the only thing left for you,' he continued, and leaned slightly toward Deshay, looking intently into his face, and at something in the look Deshay drew back with a shiver. 'There is death in your eyes,' said Claud; 'I think that you are going to die this very day'—and then the bolt fell.

"Deshay, terrified, panic-struck at some quality of the cold voice and the words and the chill light of the eyes, staggered and threw up one arm as if to ward a blow. There was no suspicion of a threat in the gesture—no intent—but Dixie, crouching at his master's side, read it differently. Before Deshay's arm began to descend the hound had

sprung. There was the shock of contact, gurgling noises, convulsive forms heaving upon the sand, the guttering sounds of—of—the *abattoir!* I saw the snout of the hound twisted sideways, the nose pushed comically upwards, the full mouth in a grotesque grin. Ah, what is more terrible, Doctor, than to see something in human guise worried and throttled by something in the guise of a brute beast?"

Leyden walked to the rail, drummed upon it with his fingers and spat several times into the sea. One guessed that he felt with the hound.

"Dixie sprang back," he continued, his face still from me; "he sprang back and stood panting, *salivating*—as a dog does when for the first and only time in his life he commits the error of picking up a toad. Dixie was a starving animal—you understand, Doctor—and his mouth was full of blood, but he did not want *that* blood—that human blood—nor did he want a human life, to save *his own.*

He backed away, then leaned far forward—as far as he could without stepping nearer, and his delicate nostrils twitched at his work—where his hold had been.

"Soon he turned and walked slowly down to the water, waded out and swam seaward, until all that I could see was the brown speck of his head just entering the outer line of surf; and then he disappeared, and it seemed to me that there were other specks about in the water; but I did not see much of anything for a while. I heard Claud laughing as if to kill himself, and apparently he did, for the natives who found me said that he was dead and one of the sailors was dead. The other sailor, Lentz and myself hung on—the sailor because he took advantage of what Dixie *would not do;* Lentz, because his pulse was slow, like a tortoise, and, like a camel, he was able to live for a while on his reserve adipose; and I, because the fever had banked my fires so low that no food was required. Besides, I am tough, and—will you please tell

me, Doctor, what in the devil ever possessed me to tell such a villainous story? That cat? *Ach!*—yes—*p'st!*—scat, you beast!"

I walked over and put a "sheep-shank" in the lanyard on the cage of the *tulu-pial* bird, and then the cat was unable to reach it.

## THE BAMBOULA.

FROM the deck of the ship the night seemed split into three zones of darkness: the vague water, with its elusive surface sheen; the heavier murk of the land, which was not black, but a deep tone of color impalpable from lack of light; then the sky, which was all that was left, and rested prone upon the other two, with no intermediary separation.

I leaned on the rail and tried to pick out the features of the land; a pale band of beach crept out of the opacity, and it seemed to me that I could see dark splotches where the *compèche* was piled. Now and then a light would spark out and disappear, in many cases its swinging motion proving it to be a torch carried in some black fist. A thin land breeze had sprung up, and it brought off the scent

of the damp earth, whiffs of wood smoke, and now and then the heavy fragrance of the stephanotis. Deeper in the gloom tossing hills threw their rough shoulders against the opaque sky.

Suddenly, from a shadowy recess in the black land there arose the steady beat of a drum—a pulsing, cavernous sound, measured in rhythmic time, neither loud nor fast; a patient sound, yet a note impalpable in quality, insistent and seeming like the throbbing heart-beat of the savage island sleeping under the black mantle of the night.

There came an alert step on the deck behind me, and a throaty voice, with the hint of a German accent, remarked at my shoulder:

"The bamboula!"

It was Dr. Leyden who spoke—a shipmate whom I had met the day we both went aboard at Demerara. He had just come down the Essequibo, after three months' orchid-hunting in the bush; an interesting man, who was by profession what one might call a "market-

naturalist." By that I mean that he was one of these not ultra-scientific collectors who can tell a rare specimen when they see it and who do the outdoor work of the "closet naturalist," in whose place they get the fever, and to whom they are ready to sell fame at so much per bone, or bug, or plant. He had been everywhere, barring the populous communities, and was at home with all primitive peoples. "No, Doctor," he said to me one day, "I speak very few languages, no more than nine or ten, but I am acquainted with a great many dialects!" He could acquire an ordinary savage dialect in about a month.

"What is it?" said I, in answer to his remark. "A dance?"

"Perhaps—it sounds like it. There are but few lights yonder in the village and there are torches moving on the mountain-side. Wait —let us see."

Just below us a shore-boat was hanging to the staging at the foot of the accommodation ladder, waiting, no doubt, to take some vis-

itors ashore. Leyden called down to them in Créole, asking if there was to be a dance that night. One of the men replied somewhat sulkily that there was not.

"A minute," said Leyden, turning to me. He slipped below, and directly I heard what appeared to be the voice of a Haytian stevedore coming from one of the freight-ports. A boatman in the bow replied guardedly, and for a few minutes there was a conversation in low tones. Soon it ceased, and Leyden rejoined me.

"There is to be a dance," said he, "but it is a small affair."

"Was that you talking from below?" I asked.

"Yes. I stood back in the shadow, and the fellow thought that he was speaking with one of the black gang. They do not like to discuss the bamboula with *leblancs*."

"Your imitation was extraordinary. If I had not suspected what you were up to I could have sworn that it was one of the Haytian

boatmen talking. You must have lived in this country."

"It was but three months, and that several years ago. I came here to catch snails. There was an experience—a thing odd and uneven. It is possible that you would be interested—listen!" He held up one hand.

From out of the illusive velvety depths that marked the contours of the tumbling hills came monotonously the "tom-tom-tom-tom-tom-tom-tom," now rising with the puff of the land breeze, waning slightly, yet unvarying as the swing of a pendulum. With it came the night smells of flowers drenched in dew and the mouldy reek of the tropic woods.

"Smell it!" said Leyden. He leaned both elbows on the rail and dropped the butt of his cigar into the black water, where it drowned with a spiteful little hiss. "The 'bamboula'—the smell of the trees and the stephanotis—*ach,* how it seems as if it were last night! That bamboula, with its tom-tom-tom! First it is quaint, then it is a nuisance, then irritat-

ing, then fascinating, and last of all it maddens. To think that such a people should have learned the secret of repeated concussions on a single group of brain-cells——"

"You have heard it before?" I interrupted, for I knew all of this he was telling me and wanted his story.

"Yes. It was when I was here five years ago looking for snails. I was crossing on a French boat, and the second day out I met the Doctor and Madame Fouchère. He was a Haytian, a *marabout,* an Adonis carved out of jet, for you know that breed are of a type magnificent and hold their fineness of skin and feature far into advanced age. He was an intelligent man, highly educated and skilled in his profession. I learned afterwards that he was the left-handed son of a former President by a *marabout* woman—one of the usual cases of *placage* of those high in official circles. Fouchère had been educated in France, and after talking with him for a while one forgot that he was black; yet I will

confess to a sense of shock when he presented me to Madame.

"She might easily have passed for pure French. I fancy that I was the only person aboard who could see the outcrop of African —or, to be polite, Haytian. She was charming in manner and appearance, inclined to be fair, with blue eyes and that dusky blonde hair which will defy any pedigree. Her face was pretty, rather piquant, and her figure *svelte* and full of grace. Altogether she was most attractive and not lacking in a certain *chic,* but there was a furtive expression about her eyes like that which I have noticed in the eyes of a trained lioness.

"I talked with the Fouchères many times during the voyage, and learned that since their marriage they had lived in Paris and were returning to Hayti for the first time. Madame, it appeared, although Haytian by birth, had been sent to a convent school in France when a mere child and had not visited her native country since then.

"The day after our arrival in New York we sailed for Hayti by the Dutch mail. By this time I had grown to know them quite well. A very decent fellow, Fouchère; different from the average educated Haytian—but, then, he was of quite a higher type. On parting at Port-au-Prince he made me promise to visit them before I left the island."

Leyden paused and shifted his position, leaning back against an awning stanchion and hooking the fingers of one hand over the boltrope above his head. The night had darkened, for a heavy cloud-bank had drifted across to shroud that part of the sky where the late moon would rise. It welded to itself the dim, broken outline of the mountain-tops and gave to the sable contour of the land the sinister aspect of looming almost to the zenith—and all the while from somewhere just beneath the surface came the hollow, rhythmic beat of the bamboula.

"Enough to drive one *loi*," muttered Leyden.

I heard a rustling from the shore-boat lying at the staging. The crew were softly picking up their oars.

"They are getting restless, those fellows below. They cannot stand it long, this night and that noise. Ho! they are shoving off without their fares." He leaned over the rail and hailed the boatman in Créole.

"*Où ça v'aller?*" he called, with a trace of irony. They paid no attention.

"*Attention, mon cher! Ou ça v'aller?*" he called, peremptorily.

"*Ca ou dit!*" growled one of the men, sulkily.

"*Côté bamboula la?*" called Leyden. They began to row again, without answering, but it seemed to me that I caught a mutter which sounded like "*nère vous écrasse!*"

Leyden chuckled. "Like master, like man in this savage country," he remarked, absently. "But I was telling you about Fouchère. When I had got my snails and a beetle or two I remembered my promise to Fou-

chère and looked him up. He had a nice place, for Hayti, up at La Coupe. I sent word that I was coming the day before, and one of his servants came down the mountain on horseback with a note from Madame expressing herself as charmed. I went up the following forenoon. You know what the journey is from Port-au-Prince to La Coupe: six miles of steady upward strain by two emaciated, dying ponies, along a road which the rains have made the dry bed of a torrential cataract; a half-wrecked surrey fastened together with ropes, two of the wheels on the wrong side before, the bush turning in the hub of one of them and screaming like a soul in torment; bad sights and bad smells at every hand, and all about you scenery which seems almost as divine as the Garden of Paradise.

"When finally I arrived, feeling like the pea in a tin whistle, the Fouchères were awaiting me; and when Madame led me through the house to the verandah in the rear, whence one got the full magnificence of the view of

the green valley stretching away to Port-au-Prince, the sparkling blue of the bay, the vivid green of the mountains rising behind Bisoton, and far in the distance the cloud-capped island of Gonave, I felt amply repaid for the sun and the dust and other trials of the trip up.

"Our *dejeuner* was very good, though, like even the best in Hayti, falling just a little short of being clean, and later in the day Dr. Fouchère ordered his ponies saddled, and we rode higher up the mountain to a point whence we were able to enjoy a magnificent view of the bay on one side and the big lakes which form part of the geographical boundary between Hayti and Santo Domingo on the other.

"We dined at six, for the Haytians retire early when they retire at all. After dinner, as we sat upon the verandah with our cigars, I became conscious of a certain lack of repose on the part of both my host and hostess. Madame was obviously making an effort to

be at ease, yet all of the time it seemed to me that she was under a certain tension; alert, expectant and a little restive—as one listens for a summons—or fears that perhaps it may have passed unobserved. Dr. Fouchère was also *distrait,* and several times I noticed that he turned his head sharply to one side, as if striving to catch some hidden sound.

"It was such a night as this—dark, still, partly clouded, but with stars and a late moon. At times there would be a flare of lightning in the south, but the five o'clock shower had come and gone and there would be no more rain. I was narrating an experience in Java, and they appeared to be interested; then, as I talked on, there came pulsing up from the valley beneath the slow, measured beat of a bamboula.

"I heard a rustle from the *chaise-longue* occupied by Madame; the dull glow at the end of Dr. Fouchère's cigar blazed suddenly bright, then died away again.

"I went on with my story, but all of the

time that wretched drum was sounding its even, tireless beat, and, although a good way off, there was something insistent about the noise which refused to be ignored. As I talked on, it began to set a time for my speech, and I found myself unconsciously trying to adjust it to my words, or, more properly, to adjust my words to *it*. Some people have a more distinct perception of time and rhythm, just as some have a keener musical ear, and I have both. The result was that before long I began to get a bit confused, missed the point of my anecdote and finished lamely and with some anger.

"'Will that fellow never finish beating that drum?' I demanded impatiently of my host. Of course, I had heard such instruments before during my sojourn in the country, and had often noticed the children thumping them in the daytime, so that the sound had no especial significance for me.

"The lighted end of Dr. Fouchère's cigar suddenly glowed again, then he remarked:

'I am afraid that noise will go on all night, Dr. Leyden. I understand that the peasants are having one of their dances to-night.' He slightly emphasized the word peasants.

"'The bamboula?' I asked, curiously, for, of course, I knew of the rites attendant upon voodoo worship, although I had never witnessed them.

"'Yes,' he answered; 'one of my servants told me this evening that there was to be a dance to-night. This relic of paganism is one of the curses of our country, Dr. Leyden. Although we whites have done our best to discountenance it, it still persists.'

"Unlike most Haytians of the better class, who pretend to a black aristocracy socially superior to the white, Dr. Fouchère always referred to himself as white, although a blacker man never walked in the full blaze of the equatorial sun. No doubt this was due to his prolonged residence among the white race.

"'Is the affair, then, as bad as it is

painted?' I inquired, for I had heard some very somber stories of the bamboula.

"He hesitated for an instant, and in the pause my ear caught the click of Madame's little slipper tapping the floor to the time of the distant drum.

" 'It is primitive,' replied my host. 'A virile people do not forget in a day the customs of centuries.' He paused again, and, as before, I heard the click-click of Madame's slipper marking the beat of the drum.

" 'Perhaps Dr. Leyden is fatigued and would wish to retire,' she suggested. 'One rises early——'

" 'Indeed,' I protested, 'I am accustomed to sleep but little, but pray do not let me keep you and Dr. Fouchère from your repose.' To tell the truth, the thought of lying on a bed and counting the strokes of that infernal drum was terrifying to me.

"There was another brief pause, but in the interval I heard Fouchère's fingers softly tap-

ping the rail in concert with the drum and the slipper of Madame."

Leyden paused and stared into the viscid water beneath. The land breeze was fanning steadily now; the regular pulses of sound had swelled in volume, but the interval was unchanged.

He continued, without looking up. "'*Derrière mornes, gagner mornes,*' as the Haytian proverb has it," he sighed. "But I did not guess what was behind their solicitude for my comfort. Fouchère politely denied any wish to retire, and Madame said that she would wait a little longer before asking to be excused.

"'Come, we will smoke a fresh cigar,' said Fouchère, presently. He clapped his hands, but no servant appeared.

"'The rascals are all out,' he said, apologetically. 'If you will pardon me, I will go myself.'

"I turned to Madame. 'Do you not find some of these customs rather terrifying?' I

asked; 'and this country, with its glaring sunlight and impenetrable shade, its rank, exuberant, primordial peoples——' I heard her give a short gasp in her throat; then she turned to me, bringing her white face, with its delicate features and great, luminous eyes, close to mine.

"'They *live!*' she answered, in a low, fierce voice. 'They *live,* and *feel,* and their blood runs——'

"She sank back, and at this moment Dr. Fouchère returned and offered me a cigar, which I took thankfully, for I wanted to drown the sensual smell of plant and fern wafted from the woods beneath and the maddening odor of the stephanotis growing in the garden at our feet. If he had offered me strong drink, cognac, absinthe, or even opium, I might have taken it, too, for there was something in the darkness of the night that blinded the reason and voices in the soft air and scent-laden breeze that called insidiously to the senses; and all the while droned on the am-

phorous note of the drum, though now it seemed to come from the inside, impelling one to fervid action.

"'Those fools will dance and drink and revel to-night,' growled Fouchère, 'and to-morrow there will not be one in the village fit to stand upon his feet.'

"'Then,' said I, with an attempt at jocularity, 'they may seek your professional advice.'

"'No,' he muttered, 'they will go to the *papa-loi*—the priest—the arch-devil——'

"There was a swift rustle, and Madame had leapt to her feet and was pacing the verandah with clinging, cat-like steps. I arose.

"'I am fatigued from sitting still,' she explained, with a light but nervous laugh. 'See, the moon is rising.'

"I glanced toward the east and saw a dull yellow glow before which the low stars paled. Madame permitted herself another turn of the verandah, and as she passed the banded shaft of light which smote through the jal-

ousies from the illuminated room I noticed that her slim fingers were closing and opening as if she were in pain. Her light footsteps fell in unison with the beat of the bamboula.

"My host and I talked on different things, and still Madame paced back and forth, and every time she passed the barred zone of light I saw the white fingers writhing in and out, and at times clutching the light fabric of her skirt in a grip that left it creased and seamed —and still the drum beat on and on. Fouchère's manner of speech had changed; his statements were short and arbitrary, as if challenging contradiction; his chair had come down to all four legs, and he sat bolt upright, tense, together, as if prepared to spring upward at a bound. As the light over the mountain glowed brighter I could see the silhouette of his straight back against the sky, as straight and cleanly cut as one of the posts of the verandah.

"Soon Madame paused in her promenade,

and, walking to the rail, gazed at the glowing light in the sky, and as she stood, the drum, partially drowned before by her light step and the swish of her skirts, welled out resonantly. I glanced at her curiously. It was still too dark to distinguish her features, but a naturalist, or, more properly, perhaps, a collector, can see things to which better eyes than his are blind, and it seemed to me that I caught a swift quiver as it flashed across her mobile face. Suddenly she turned.

"'I think that I shall beg to be excused,' she said, in a low voice. 'The heat of the day has fatigued me, and the night air is cool and promises refreshing sleep. Would not Monsieur wish also to retire?'

"Dr. Fouchère arose as if to show me to my room. I had no desire to go to bed, for I did not think I could sleep; but, following the line of least resistance, I went.

"Lying on my bed, with that old and jaundiced moon peering through the window and the whole earth wrapped in the stillness of

utter space, the bamboula, which had never ceased, seemed pounding at the portals of my brain. Have you ever, after a day of almost superhuman physical exertion—say a long march through the jungle carrying a double pack—lain too tired to sleep and listened to your overtaxed heart pounding its pulse against your ear-drums? No? Well, it is hard to say what else that drum was like. It appeared, too, to have grown louder, although the time continued to be exactly the same.

"Before long I dozed a little, but the drum beat on, weaving weird and distorted pictures. I saw the stark, whirling figures glistening ebony-red in the lurid firelight, the outer circle of fantastic shadows gyrating in a wider arc; the flash of flames between the circling shapes — others partly hidden — watching from the black hollows between the buttressed boles of the trees. The old, old rites—bursting out in this civilized era like embryonic cells in the adult—cancer-cells—you understand, Doctor. Later on, the sickly yellow

moon, high in the zenith, its pale light quenching that of the dying embers of the fire and waning itself before the dawn. The things it looked down upon—the heaving figures of the devotees—and all about the pure, sweet peace of the tropic night!

"'Tom - tom - tom - tom - tom - tom - tom - tom,' went the drum, and then I awoke with a shiver and began to dress. I stepped to the window for added light, and other noises than those of the drum welled up from the valley beneath. Air was stirring, and it blew through my jalousies and filled the room with the smell of the stephanotis.

"Quietly as a cat I slipped down the stairs and out into the night. Not a sound, not a flicker of light came from any of the little houses in the village. I followed the road down the mountain for a way, and then, as I am a tracker and the moon was well up, I found a path which others had taken since the dew. It skirted the hill, then dipped abruptly into the jungle.

"It was easy to guess its course, for with my bushman's education I saw that many persons had traveled that trail since sunset. Down it went, twisting and turning, this way and that; but all the time the beat of the drum, though muffled by the heavy foliage, was growing nearer and nearer.

"It was dark in the jungle, but the moon was up, and there were open spaces here and there. The smell of the smoke—and another smell—were in the air, and I was growing wary and looking for sentries, when my eye was caught by something white hanging to a thorn. I loosed it and held it in a moon-ray —and recognized a fragment of the gown worn that night by Madame Fouchère."

Leyden stopped speaking, then began to hum a little German doggerel. Down below the visitors were saying good-night, and I could hear the men kissing each other on their thick lips. "*Ah, mon cher!*" they kept saying. "*Oh—oh, mon cher!—Oh, m'cher!*" Then there would be a rattle of very good

Parisian French, because the better classes pride themselves upon their elegance of speech.

"And then?" said I, presently, to Dr. Leyden. He threw out his hands with a Teutonic gesture of disgust.

"*Ach!*—then I went back, of course. I found a muddy spot in the open, just to make sure, and I saw that Fouchère had passed also. He wore the latest French boots—Madame was still in her high-heeled French slippers at twenty francs the pair."

He turned to me with a languid air. "One does not spy upon one's host and hostess during their religious devotions, you know. You understand, Doctor. Those things are not quite—shall we say dignified? Besides—by the way, have you a cigar, or shall I ring? Ah, thanks! As I was about to say, the thing had lost its—its glamour. Madame was too nearly white. It was the primitive element that had so strongly appealed to me—not the hyper-æsthetic. One need not go to Hayti

for that. Fouchère belonged at the party, perhaps—but Madame . . .

"No, I went back, and the sound of a bamboula has never since been able to strike a sympathetic chord in me—but I detest the odor of the stephanotis."

## INTO THE DARK

O-NIGHT, Doctor," said Leyden one evening as we went on deck, "let us forswear the exchange of blood-curdling yarns. Let us be sociable and play poker with my Czechian friend, Rosenthal, and Mr. Mallock."

I agreed and we went into the *rook kamer*, where the others presently joined us. We played for perhaps an hour; I do not remember just how the game stood when we were interrupted by a tragic incident.

From somewhere beneath us there came a sudden muffled roar; the little vessel quivered as though struck by a shell; an instant of silence, then up from below there came a scream so wild and hoarse and laden with fearful human anguish that we all leaped to our feet. Shouts, yells, orders in half a dozen

tongues rose in a clamorous medley; but through them all as a bugle rings out on the firing-line there rose again that wild, wide-throated scream of intolerable physical pain.

I knew the sound. I had heard it several times. The latest was in San Francisco on one of the big United States transports when a stevedore had up-ended a crate of primers which had exploded and filled the man's body with splinters so that he looked like a porcupine. Leyden had heard it also, as the first glance at his face told me, and from his expression I saw that he had guessed the present cause; but there was no time to inquire, for the screams now followed each other in quick succession and were approaching, and such screams! Opposite me Rosenthal, who had thrown down his hand at the beginning of the play and was about to take a swallow of his Rhine wine, paused, the glass half way to his lips, and hardened, world-worn adventurer that the Jew was, he positively looked sickened at the sound.

And then the clamor reached our deck, but forward, and we turned as one man and stepped out of the *rook kamer*. Abreast of the steam steering-gear there was a confused mass of yelling, gyrating figures, and from these we saw emerge a single one who with outspread arms and wide fingers came lurching toward us, and as he ran he screamed.

The bulk of my professional work has been of an emergency character, so that even as the man approached I was framing a diagnosis, and before he had reached the part of the deck where we stood, it was made. The jar of the explosion, the screams of appalling pain, and now, swiftly as he approached, the suffocating fumes of ammonia had preceded him, and I knew on the instant that there had been an explosion of the ice-making machine and that the victim was one who had bathed in the liquid fire set loose. Then as he bore down upon us, followed by the clamoring crowd who sought to restrain him for his good, something of the spirit of the hunted animal

fastened on the poor frenzied intellect and he sprang for the rail.

"*Ach,* no!" muttered Leyden in my ear, and at the same instant leaped like a cat; one of his powerful, nervous hands closed on the man's naked shoulder and the next moment the poor wretch was on his back, pawing the air, groping at his livid face, while his screams smote back the crowd of the curious.

"Quick, Doctor!" said Leyden, and the words wedged in his throat as the pungent fumes gripped his trachea. He tried again to speak, but by that time I had seized Rosenthal's bottle of Rhine wine from the table and had begun to pour it over the man's face. Of course, there are better things than Rhine wine with which to neutralize stronger ammonia, but that was the nearest at hand and haste was requisite.

Presently the ship's doctor arrived with dilute acetic acid; by that time Leyden and I were both nearly asphyxiated and the man

was in a syncope, poor fellow! He saw light again, but never outline.

Our game was abandoned. Leyden and I strolled aft to our favorite place by the hand steering-gear, where Leyden puffed at his porcelain pipe in silence for so long a time that I began to think that he would hold to the resolution made early in the evening and not tell the story which hung on the edge of his mind.

"*Ach!*" he exclaimed suddenly, and taking the pipe from his mouth, tapped the horn mouth-piece against the awning stanchion. "*Ach!* One would almost think that God might spare a man two such spectacles as that which we have just witnessed. I am accustomed to seeing men killed, Doctor; also to seeing men suffer within reasonable limits, but I protest against casually witnessing torture. . . .

"It was not so long ago, Doctor," he resumed presently, "I was going out to Java via Singapore, and the first night out, while

chatting with the chief engineer, who was an old friend of mine, his second came to the door to report on something concerning the engines. I did not notice what he said, for the moment he stepped into the blaze of the incandescent lights I set my memory at work to place him.

"This second engineer was, I think, Doctor, the most strikingly beautiful man I have ever seen. Really, the poor fellow was so handsome that he was almost disagreeably conspicuous, because one felt that no matter how great the effort, his deeper personality would never be able to hold the pace set by his physical appearance. I will not try to describe him; figure to yourself a powerful frame of athletic perfection, the face of a very masculine archangel, broad forehead, blazing sapphire eyes, with rather dark lashes, although his hair was yellow, a wide mouth of singularly winning expression and a jaw which was aristocratically masterful. He said but half a dozen words, and then at a nod from the chief, went

out, but brief as was my glimpse of him I was no less impressed by his striking beauty than by the fact that I had known some of his breed.

"'Who is that fellow?' I asked of old Burton, the chief.

"'Dalton, my second,' said he; 'a good looking lad, is he not?'

"'Extremely,' I answered; 'is he as good as he looks?'

"'Aye, and the more credit to him for that, to my mind,' said Burton, and went on, 'D'ye know, Doctor Leyden, the Almighty puts an awful strain on the moral construction of a man when he models him on the lines of yon lad! And the boy knows it and is not too proud to shun the danger. You'll scarce lay eyes on him between here and Singapore.'

"'Is he shy of his good looks?' I asked.

"'Less that than proper-minded. If ever a man was built to carry an overload of women's fancies, 'tis this same Dalton. They can

see nothing else when the poor lad's about, not that he seems to notice it.'

"'Is he a good man professionally?' I inquired.

"'He is all of that and more,' answered Burton, and was going on to tell me that, although off duty at that moment, Dalton was hard at work superintending some repairs on the ice-machine when he was interrupted . . . . just as we were a few moments ago."

"No!" I cried involuntarily, as Leyden paused; "not that!"

"Yes, Doctor . . . the sequence of events was almost identical: the same explosion . . . the same sensation as of being hit by a shell . . . the same instant's pause followed by cries, one louder than the others, and the same stampede for the deck, the air, freedom from torture and suffocation; but in Dalton's case no one was quick-witted enough to think of Rhine wine or vinegar, and we had to hold him until the doctor came . . . *Ach!* . . .

"It seemed a long time, Doctor, especially

as the man's strength was so great that after his first mad rush his mind grappled with the situation and he lay without a moan, without a struggle. I assisted the surgeon in the little that it was possible to do for the poor fellow, and it was while we were bathing his face that I solved the problem of his identity. For many years, Doctor, I have, whenever in England, made a tour of inspection of several large estates where I occupy a rather unique position of consulting horticulturist. To these patrons I sometimes ship from different parts of the world bulbs or plants or seeds or specimens in which I judge they will be interested. It was while on one of these visits, some of which have become more of a social than professional character, that I met Dalton, which, of course, was not his name. He was then at school, a charming boy, an only son and the heir to one of the oldest titles and most magnificent estates in England.

"This discovery did not come to me with any shock of surprise, for England is unlike

America, where one often sees the thoroughbred working with his hands, and I had suspected that his was either some youthful tragedy or the baton sinister.

"Dalton lay quite still while the surgeon dressed and bandaged his face; then, as the last pin was being inserted, he said in a steady voice:

" 'How about my eyes, Doctor?'

"We'll hope for the best, old chap,' said this doctor, and I saw Dalton's mouth, the only feature in sight, set with the rigidity of a death-mask. His chest filled deeply and he swallowed once or twice, and when he spoke again his voice was dry but quite firm.

" 'You think the chances are against me, don't you, Doctor?' he said quietly. The surgeon looked doubtfully at me and I nodded.

" 'Your case is like this, Dalton,' said he, 'if the caustic action of the ammonia has not burned through the conjunctiva and into the cornea the prognosis is good; otherwise it is bad—but I don't anticipate total blindness.'

"'How soon will you be able to tell with certainty?' asked Dalton, calmly.

"'Probably when I dress your eyes tomorrow,' said the Doctor, adding, 'at the worst, you will never be in the dark. . . .'

"'I know. . . .' Dalton's voice was very low, very quiet; . . . 'you mean that I will live behind ground glass. . . .'

"The firm mouth stiffened and the triangular space which it occupied beneath the bandages grew suddenly white. At a sign from the doctor we picked him up and carried him to his berth and left him there to fight his fight alone.

"That night I sat late with Burton and the pious old chief had a sharp tussle to remain within the bounds of Christian submission as we discussed the accident. I soon discovered that he knew more of Dalton than he cared to tell, but I asked no questions. When I left him at eleven o'clock I passed the open door of Dalton's room, and as I did so I was conscious of one of those long, deep, shuddering inspi-

rations which scarcely carry sound and seem wrung less from the body than the tortured soul.

"'Are you in pain?' I whispered, for I did not wish to wake him if he should be asleep.

"'In torture, Doctor Leyden,' came the low answer; 'but it is not of the flesh.'

"This was the first indication that I was known to him. I slipped into the room and went to the head of his bunk.

"'May I sit with you?' I asked.

"'Thanks . . . you know me, of course?'

"'Yes,' said I. I dropped on the locker beside him, and for several moments neither of us spoke.

"'What do *you* think of my chances of losing my sight, Doctor?' he asked presently.

"'I think,' said I, 'that your sight will be impaired, but not entirely destroyed. One eye appears to have been less injured than the other.'

"'Do you think that I will be able to do my work?' he asked quickly.

"'Perhaps . . . it is impossible to tell, my dear boy, until to-morrow—very likely not for several days.'

"Again I felt that shuddering sigh which was less a sound than an impression.

"'It is not for myself that I am afraid, Doctor Leyden,' he said in a few moments. 'There is some one else . . . other people . . . .'" My word! One could see his very heart squirming in the grip of his feudal pride.

"'Tell me all about it, my boy,' said I. 'Life has shown me many of her poisons . . . and their antidotes; perhaps I can help you.'

"'Thank you, Doctor,' said he, and went on to tell me his story. Briefly, he had several years before committed the indiscretion of running off with another man's wife; not long afterward the husband had died and Dalton had married the woman. His father had cut him off without a penny, but through a friend he had got a billet as engineer, for which his technical education had fitted him, and had in

time risen solely through his merits. The wife and their two children were living in Singapore.

"There were qualities in the romance, Doctor, which raised it to a plane higher than most similar affairs. Ten years of poverty had brought them no regrets, and this alone seemed to me sufficient to warrant the breach of etiquette; then, the former husband was a rake, or, what is far worse, an ex-rake. Also, the love of this man and woman had grown and deepened and gathered volume until, and this I gathered from what Dalton did *not* tell me, the love itself contained in him had raised the nature of this man to a sublime height, where it would almost seem that he had undergone an apotheosis; this perfect love which had begun so imperfectly had matured this creature, who was the result of generations of highly bred and highly cultured ancestors, until the man was an Olympian, Doctor, a demi-god, or I am no judge of men.

"Before long I left him, soothed as much

as might be, and promising to sleep. When I visited him the following day he was calm, and one read only in the lines of the firm and beautiful mouth which cut the triangular space between the bandages, '*I wait.*' "

Leyden's voice grew muffled.

"My word! I couldn't stand it, Doctor, for very long; it was worse than the accident itself. I sneaked off into Burton's room, and there the surgeon found me an hour later lying on the old man's bunk, for he was below at the time, and holding a capsized book in front of my face. There was a simplicity about this doctor which appealed to me.

" 'Oh, hell!' said he, and dropped into Burton's desk chair and buried his face in his hands, and there he sat until presently the chief came in. From behind my book I could feel the grizzled old fellow looking from one to the other of us, and presently he gave a husky and inquiring grunt.

" 'Blind,' said the doctor, . . . . stone blind,' and with that old Burton kicked shut

the door which opened on the boiler-room, and the three of us began to snivel in the shame-faced way characteristic of certain emotional members of the Anglo-Saxon race. I think Burton prayed a little, for he was inclined to be theosophical.

"'Does he know?' asked Burton, presently.

"'No,' muttered the doctor, . . . I . . . I put him off. . . .'

"'You put him off!' I snapped. 'Do you mean to say that you have any hope?'

"'There's none to have,' he answered a bit sulkily; 'the cornea might just as well have been seared with a Paquelin. . . .'

"'And yet you put him off!' I snarled, 'and add the hell of uncertainty to the agony he's got to suffer anyway when he hears the truth!'

"'Go in and tell him yourself then,' grumbled this doctor.

"'I will,' said I, and flung open the door and went out. I found Dalton lying on his

bunk, his face swathed in fresh bandages, his straight mouth sphinx-like.

"'Dalton,' said I, roughly, 'the doctor has just told me that you are blind.'

"'Has he?' said Dalton, calmly. 'The poor chap lacked the nerve to tell me, and I don't know that I blame him much. Beastly thing, that, to have to tell a chap that he's blind.'

"I began to choke up again, Doctor. I had been purposely rough, commonplace, and I had expected and in fact half wished an hysterical outburst. As it was, the situation was infinitely more difficult. For several minutes Dalton did not speak.

"'Would you like me to stay with you?' I asked, 'or shall I get out?'

"The bandaged head rolled toward me and the fine mouth curved in a smile which showed the white, even teeth.

"'Don't stay, Doctor; it is horribly depressing for you and I am so busy thinking that I don't notice being alone. Come in and see me to-night, if you like.'

"I left him then and went aft on the other side of the ship from Burton's room, and as I went I looked my hardest at the blue water and the blue sky and the bright-work and the bright faces of the children scampering up and down the deck . . . and then a mist came before my eyes and my vision was as Dalton's would be, 'behind ground glass.'

"That night I went to him again. He greeted me quietly as I came in.

" 'Doctor Leyden,' said he, 'it is a terrible thing to be blind, is it not?'

"I did not answer.

" 'But it is not a terrible thing to die. We none of us fear to face death; most of us enjoy a bit of a tussle with the grim old man.'

"I had expected this and waited for him to go on.

" 'To myself,' said Dalton, 'I consider that I am dead, practically dead.' He was silent for a few minutes and then said, 'Do you not

consider, Doctor Leyden, that we have all of us a certain claim upon each other as fellow-men?'

"'Undoubtedly,' I answered.

"'I am glad that you feel as I do,' said he composedly, 'because my claim upon *you*, Doctor Leyden, is that you go to my father and tell him of my death and its cause and make him support my family as they should be supported. He must make my oldest boy his heir. Will you do this for me? There is no desperate hurry; within a year will be time enough.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'I will do it.'

"He was silent for many minutes and then he turned to me, and again his flashing smile illumined the triangular open space.

"'And now as to details,' said he. 'You would not try to prevent me if I were to get out of my bunk and get over the rail, would you, Doctor Leyden?'

"'No,' I answered. 'I would not try to prevent you.'

"There was another silence, and then he said in a low voice:

" 'Don't you think that it would be easier . . . . for her?'

" 'No,' I said, 'I don't.'

" 'But living I can only be a weight a drag.'

" 'Her little children are that,' said I.

" 'But don't you see,' he cried, 'how different it is? They will grow up. . .' His voice rose in key.

" 'They will grow up and need her less,' said I; 'it is while they are drags, weights, that they give her the greatest joy.'

" 'Don't,' he groaned, '. . . . don't you see, man, that my mind was at rest about it; that I was cheerful, happy, when it was only a matter of dying, . . . and now that you are taking that away, think of the horror of what's left. . . .' His mouth writhed.

" 'You are the chief sufferer,' said I. 'My sympathy is for you. I did not mean to destroy your faith in the ethics of this thing.

Personally, for your *own* good, I would advise you to get overboard, and if you wish I will lead you to the rail. I have been truthfully answering the questions which you asked me concerning your wife. . . .'

"We were both silent for many minutes."

" 'I begin to see it now, I begin to see it . . . you are right. . . .' And then, Doctor, as he looked down the long, dark, narrow corridor stretching away into the years of obscurity before him the shadow fell across his soul and I left him writhing beneath the weight of his doom."

Leyden paused and turned his pale, classic face toward the liquid darkness of the star-flecked sky. " . . . See all of those planets, Doctor," he mused, "and think of what the sight of just one of them would mean to a blind man . . . a single break in the utter obliteration of a sense . . . a pin-prick in the curtain. . . . I once witnessed an operation which restored to a blind man the perception of light alone . . . no vision, only light

. . . . and he would place his hands over his eyes and then take them away and laugh with the joy of a heart too full for utterance. Think of the myriad things we see which go to waste! My word, it makes one wish to treasure the image of each passing object. . . ."

"And now, Doctor, I will tell you the rest, and then you shall tell me if I was a fool to answer him so truthfully; in my own mind I have never been quite sure.

"Three days saw the end of his period of frantic and agonized depression, for his stoicism and self-control abandoned him as soon as I removed the balm of a voluntary death. In this time he would see none of us; would eat because he had determined to live; but one could see that a word of comfort, of sympathy, would be infuriating. Next came a week of apathy while the wound was granulating . . . inside and out. What is it, Doctor, which regulates the duration of violent pain when its cause still persists? In the case of this newly

blinded man, with his high vitality and potent perceptions, one could not conceive of such a thing as reconciliation, nor did it arrive as such. . . ."

"The first inkling I had of the change was while we were going down the Red Sea. I had gone to pay my usual afternoon visit; one of the mess boys was coming from Dalton's room, and as he stepped into the corridor I heard Dalton's voice say peevishly:

" 'Be sure to get it well done and plenty of gravy . . . do you hear, plenty of gravy.'

"*Ach!* For no reason the words shocked me more than when he had told me of his wish to die! Plenty of gravy . . .! What could it matter to a man newly blind if his gravy were of gall and wormwood? What *could* it matter?"

"Dalton had before this time recovered from the physical effects of the shock; the epidermis of his face had not been deeply burned; the danger to his eyes was due to the fact that the irritation of the caustic had in-

voluntarily forced him to hold the lids shut, thus causing the stuff to burn the more deeply. His face had been blistered as it might from any burn and the new skin had formed beneath, and at this time the bandages were off and the only evidence of the accident was in the pellucid film drawn across his pupils. He wore dark glasses to prevent the irritant action of the light.

"It was a few days later that I received another shock. The chief and I were standing by the railing talking when, glancing forward, I saw the doctor come around the corner of the deck-house leading Dalton by the hand. Burton caught sight of them as soon as I, and happening to glance at him, I saw an odd expression cross his face; it was not alone the shadow of pain and compassion, which would have been natural—there was something puzzled in the look, something studious, contemplative. The doctor led Dalton to a wicker *chaise-longue* and left him there. The face of the blind man was turned in our direction,

but our voices failed to reach him above the swash alongside.

"'Poor lad!' said Burton, in a low voice. 'He were better dead, Doctor. I . . . I . . . I did not think to see him abide by it. . . . There was a vague disappointment in the old man's voice which irritated me.

"'I agree with you that he would be better off himself if he were dead,' I answered curtly, 'but there are others than himself to consider.'

"Burton shook his head.

"' 'Twould be better for him if he were dead,' he answered; 'he can no longer contribute to their support; and as far as sentiment is concerned, why, do you not see, Doctor——'

"'Do I not see what?' I asked testily, the more so because I saw very well, and I felt that it was my work.

"'That he is no longer the same man,' said Burton. 'Look at the face of him as he turns

it this way. Do you think that dark glasses could ever make that change?'

"Once again, Doctor, there ran through me the little chill which I had felt on hearing Dalton emphasize the detail of his dinner. Burton was right; he no longer was the same man, and as I realized this and was able to look with clear sight far into his future I felt for the moment as if I had tampered with the man's soul. We are what we are by virtue of our senses, Doctor, for it is through them that we give and receive and translate and modify and perform the various functions and evolve the phenomena, the sum of which is known as life. Of these senses sight is perhaps the one through which we receive the most and must keep on receiving, to fulfil the constant demand of the dependencies of this sense, and just as the nature of a man is rounded and made fuller and finer and greater by that which he sees, so must it shrivel and wane when this tributary of the soul is cut off.

"It is, of course, unnecessary to state that

Dalton was an object of the most supreme compassion to the passengers, and where he had at first shunned their expressions of sympathy I noticed that as the days wore on he first endured, then courted them. His face, too, had changed; the fine, sensitive lines about the mouth and eyes were gradually erased; he began to put on flesh; his appetite was better than before the accident; his demeanor grew to be gentle and passive. I have seen women read to him by the hour and finally close the book and steal away in tears, but do you know, Doctor, that while my compassion was as great as ever, the change in the man had cooled my sympathy. I grew to be sorry for him only with my head."

"Burton understood. He said to me one day, ' 'Tis a rough thing, Doctor Leyden, that I cannot take yon poor lad's hurt more to heart, but 'tis not as if 'twas Dalton himself in such trouble. Honestly, Doctor, I believe that part of the man I loved was killed in him with the loss of his sight. . . .' He glanced

narrowly down the deck to where Dalton was talking earnestly with one of the women passengers. 'Look now . . . one cannot imagine Dalton so pouring out his soul to a stranger, for the lad was always shut within himself with a double water-tight bulkhead!'

"'He told me this morning,' said I, 'that the passengers were taking up a collection for him.'

"'Did he, now? . . . but there! . . . why not for a poor fellow with a wife and children, struck blind in the performance of his duty? Only . . . only . . .'

"'Only it is not like Dalton,' said I, harshly.

"'No, Doctor. Belike it is the humbleness of soul which comes to those whom the Lord deeply chastens, . . . and it is a balm, Doctor, . . . a balm. . . .'

"When the ship reached Singapore I offered to conduct Dalton to his home. It was a sweet spot on one of the charming little islands a short row from the mainland; a bun-

galow half hidden in the foliage, a diminutive jetty with a dozen steps leading into the dark green shadows. As our sampan drew near I saw a woman with a toddling child on either side step from this plushy background and descend the steps. Seeing me, a white man and a stranger, she paused at the head of the toy jetty, but as Dalton, wearing his dark glasses, began to fumble at the ladder with no hail, no word of greeting, she slipped her hands from those of the children and ran forward swiftly.

"'Hugh! . . .' she cried. '. . . Hugh!'

"'One minute, girlie,' answered Dalton. His voice was full, cheerful, a *fat* voice, Doctor, and a trifle flat in *timbre,* and as it reached the ears of the woman I saw her stop as one might stop who runs to meet a bullet full in the chest.

"'Hugh!' she cried again, and as she was by this time close at hand, I spoke.

"'He has met with an accident to his eyes

. . . ,' I began . . . . and then looked away, but not in time to miss the expression of her face as she cast her eyes first at her husband, then at me, . . . and I knew that I had fetched home a stranger to fill a husband's place."

Leyden paused and stared moodily at the bowl of his china pipe. "There is a good deal in sacred literature, as well as in the laws of each land, Doctor, concerning the impropriety of interfering with the duration of a man's life; is there anything regarding the sin of interfering with his death . . . ? because there ought to be! It cannot be pleasing to God to prolong an existence which He has culled in part. . . ."

"Six months later I returned that way on my journey home from Java. I took a sampan and was sculled across to the little island, and there in front of the bungalow I found Dalton sitting beneath the high shade of the royal palms. He had grown heavy; the last lines had left his face, which was now smooth as

that of a child. I noticed as his hands rested on the arms of the chair that the thumbs had thickened, yet his other senses had begun to do the mechanical work of his lacking sight."

"'Is that you, Leyden?' he asked, in a full, flat, heavy voice, the voice which suggested a fat throat. His two children were playing about his chair; all three were munching a confection of sugar and chopped cocoanut.

"'Yes,' he said, in answer to my question. 'We are doing nicely. Ah, Leyden, each cloud has its silver lining. . . .' His wife joined us at this point and a glance at her face showed me the change. I had never known it otherwise, yet the change was evident. '. . . I wrote to the earl . . . .' continued Dalton—his voice grew slightly peevish—'. . . . and while he was not above hurting the feelings of a poor blind man . . . .'—the fat voice grew querulous—'. . . . he was generous . . . . very generous . . . .'—a complacent note crept in.

"I glanced at the woman and a shiver ran

down my back. 'I am glad . . . .' I managed to mutter, '. . . . very glad . . . .' She glanced at me warningly and laid her finger on her lips, then nodded toward the landing. I shook his hand, which was sticky from the sweet-meats.

" 'Good-bye . . . . I have barely time . . . .' I mumbled and followed the woman toward my boat."

THE END

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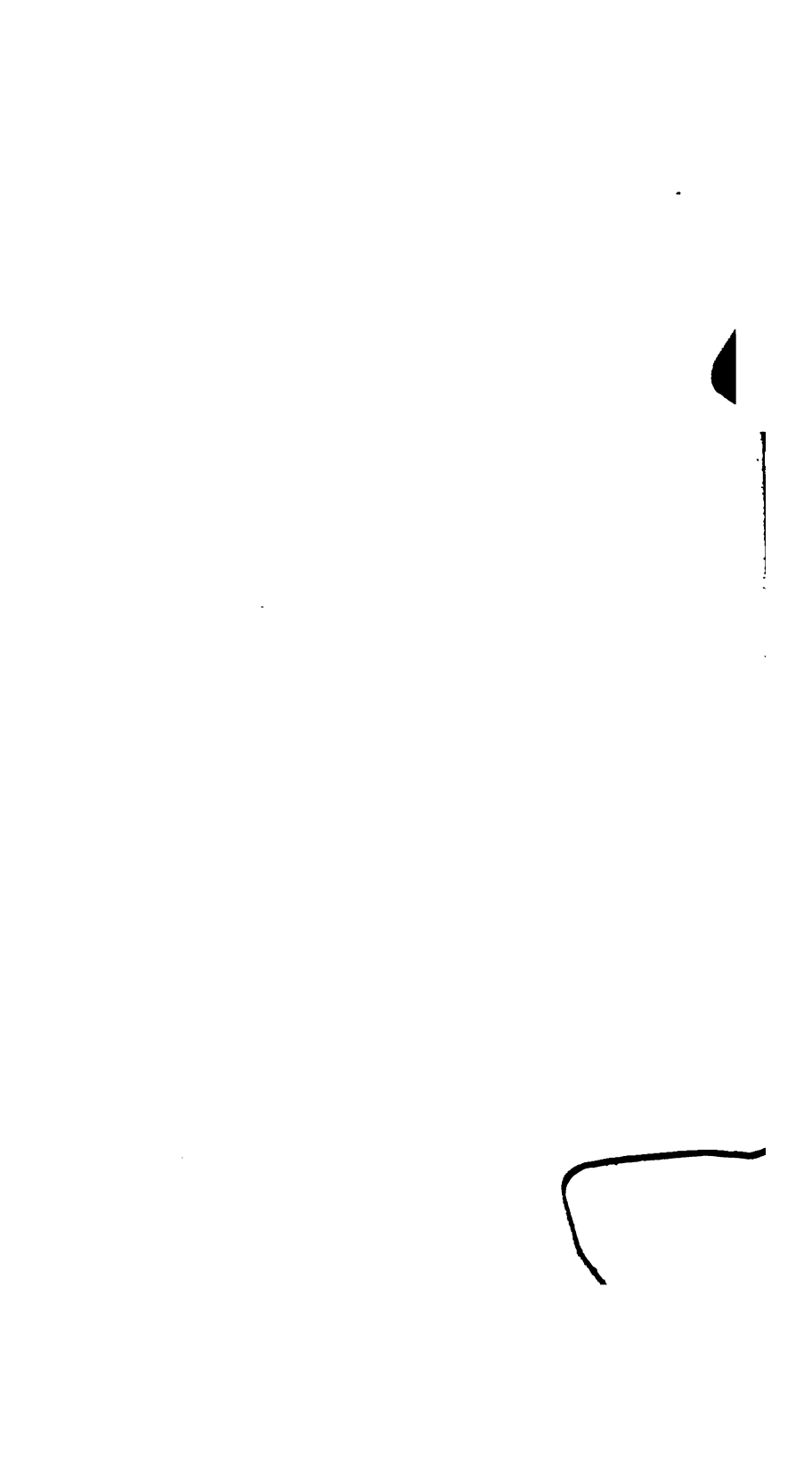

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